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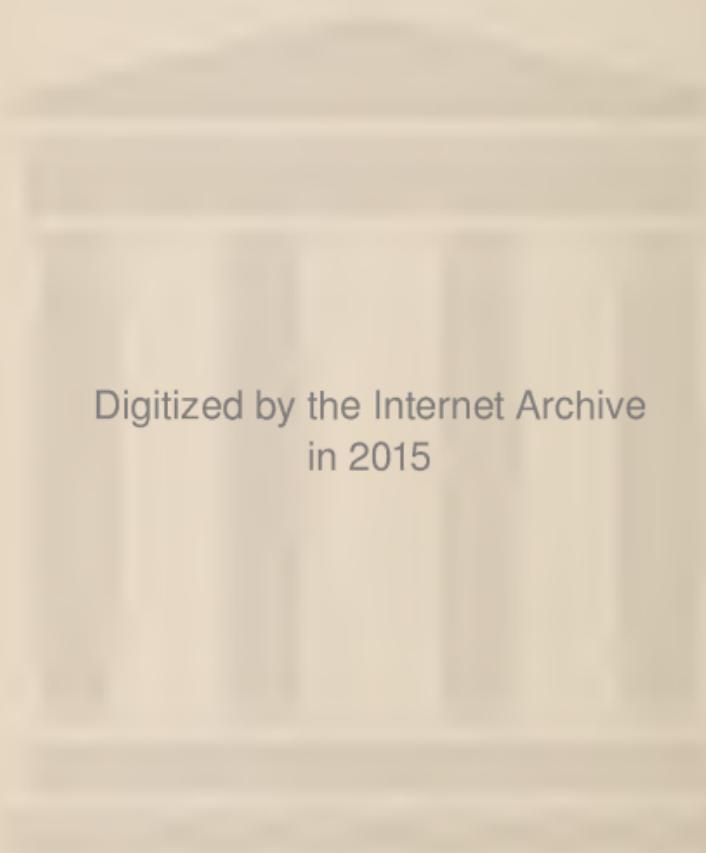
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Luke X: 26. What is written in the law? how readest thou?

THE Questioner and the questioned on this occasion are of the deepest interest. He who puts these questions is the Eternal Author of law. He is the Being in whom law had its origin, from whom it derives its authority, in whom it possesses its force. Law is law because He uttered it. Into the presence of this Author of law, a professional lawyer has come. One whose life work is to transcribe and rewrite that law, its infinite Author has given. The two men are thus brought closely together, as we might say, professionally. In their vital interest in law. He who gave it, and he who has studied it all his life. No wonder the questions of the Master were with relation to the common theme, and the mutual ground of contact—that which brought them together in person not only, but that which allied them in thought—law. The questions the Master puts are wholly divergent in their character, and involve two very different things. The one is abstract, the other is concrete. The one is fact, the other is idea. The one is outward. The other is within. The one relates to a book; the other involves a life. “What is written in the law? how readest thou?” The one of these questions is very easy to answer. The other—not so easy. This lawyer, catching on at once to the easier, answers it with all a

lawyer's acumen, and with all a scribe's enthusiasm. He could give in a nutshell what was "written in the law." He never answered the other except unintentionally; as, in that interview with the Master, he told what he didn't intend to tell. In words, he answered the first question; in spirit, he answered the other. Now, the Master's hearing was equally alert, whether He listened to a man's voice, or heard the silent language of a man's soul. He hears us when we speak, and He hears the inner voices of spirit that find no utterance, that are too ardent for speech. He listened to this lawyer's words, and He listened to his life. In one way He got the answer to the one question; in the other to the other. Both problems were solved—what was in the law—the old question that had been answered so many times, and the new question of the hour, what was in that law for him who spoke, how he read it. The vocal answer was quick, comprehensive, lawyer-like and complete. It was a splendid presentation of his case before the clearest-headed Judge, lawyer ever addressed. And he answering said, "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." To that studied, shrewd reply the Author of law gave this testimony: "Thou hast answered right." But that other question. Unwittingly, and without intent, he gives answer to that. Not in words, as I have said. He doesn't tell in speech. But his posture of soul gives answer. His attitude of spirit tells the

tale. That question he puts to the Master gives him away. If he intended to have any secret in his life, that laid it open. If he proposed to keep anything back, that question was a full surrender. It showed just how he read the law, just the way he looked into it, and just the way he had been accustomed to be its interpreter. And this was the open window he lifted before the Master. "He, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?" To whom do I owe obligation? Whom am I to love as I love myself? The whole man lay open. A life was all exposed. Long years were on exhibition. He was a self-righteous, self-satisfied, self-centered Pharisee after all. And he read the law after a Pharisee's fashion. "To justify himself." To prove that he was all right. He read the law in the narrowness of the letter, that would regard as his neighbor only the man or the woman that lived next door. The second door from his, he would recognize no obligation. That was too far off. So he showed himself an ingenious splitter of hairs, a genuine Jewish casuist, wrapped up and closely folded in the minor matters of the law. He revealed his posture of soul. He shewed his inmost attitude of spirit. Just what he was. Just how he read the law. For these lives of ours are sometimes wrongly judged when we look in on sudden moments of sudden impulse. The tenor and the trend of life are the only solution; just what this lawyer opened to the Master that day they met in Jerusalem. What we do is but the product of what

we are. Sudden moments are but indices of the long, quiet, forceful hours. As Helen Hunt Jackson has forcibly written:

“Men said to-day, of one who sinned, ‘What may This mean ? what sudden madness overtook His brain, that in a moment he forsook The rectitude which until yesterday Had made his life a beacon by the way To common men ?’”

I answered:

“We but look on surfaces. Temptation never shook One soul whose secret hidden forces lay Firm-centered in the right. The glacier bides For ages white and still, and seems a part Of the eternal Alps. But at its heart, Each hour, some atom noiseless jars, and slides, Until the avalanche falls with thundering weight. God only knows the beginning’s date!”

It is the life-long purpose, the soul’s bent, that tells. It was the more important of these questions that the lawyer of long ago answered when he didn’t mean to, as he threw open that window into his soul; as he told, in that question, the story of his life. Always, as to any book the pages of which we open, the question, What is written in that book ? is overshadowed and eclipsed by the more searching question, “How readest thou ?” Whether the Bible or Robert Elsmere. Whether Pascal or Tom Paine. “Unto the pure all things are pure.” If we read through green glasses, every sentiment will be green. We can read Shakespeare for instruction, or for lasciviousness.

Byron for beauty or for baseness. Dickens for delight or for despair. "Not that which goeth in at the mouth" said the Master, "defileth a man, but that which goeth out." So we may say, on the same principle, not that which goeth in at the eyes, at any portal of these souls of ours, at any of these windows into our spirits, but that which comes out—this tests character, this makes the man. Not what we read, but how we read it. Not what is written, but what we see. It is important, always, to have correct conceptions of truth outwardly, to know accurately "what is written." Not to be mistaken about that. It is better to have a right theology. It is better to be orthodox, though some charming people are not. But it is of infinitely more importance to have the truth subjectively. To get it right when it is fused and melted into these hearts of ours, and become a part of ourselves. "The Lord," says the psalmist, "desireth truth in the inward parts and in the hidden part (he) shall make (us) to know wisdom." Way down inside of us, truth is to find a lodgement, and right a resting place. This is of incomparably more importance than truth on the outside. As the goddess of Liberty was borne in regal state through the streets of Paris, Madame Roland exclaimed in the accents that have become immortal: "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" We may employ the same apostrophe to truth, truth in outward statement, truth in metaphysical analysis, truth in catechism and creed, "What is written in the law?" "O truth! what crimes

have been committed in thy name!" Here Rome has reared her inquisition, turned her thumb-screws, lighted her fagots, sharpened her swords. In thy name, witches have been burned in Rhode Island. Slaves driven with the lash in the cotton fields of the South. Thirty thousand votes cast into the air in November! All kinds of crime. All degrees of folly. In the name of truth. Truth must get inside of us, or it isn't a practical force in human affairs. A good man will get more out of the Koran than a bad man out of the Bible. Some of the best people in the world are advocates of the most pernicious systems. In their innate goodness they have extracted all that was worth anything out of the evil and the pernicious and the wrong, have transformed it into their own sterling integrity, and made it a power of righteousness, a pillar of truth. What they read was distorted and awry, but the way they read it unravelled the tangle, took out the twist, and set them straight as an arrow in the practice of virtue, in obedience to right and law. Every aim in life hits the bull's eye. Their own unsullied natures, their own untainted hearts, turn the basest metal into gold. They scatter sunshine in darkest recesses of error and mistake. They pour bright beams into the caverns of caricature, into dens of deviltry and death. But a bad man, into whose inmost texture of soul truth never penetrates, no matter how correctly or carefully he reads it, at the portal of whose inner nature right and law never get a hearing, he is, in the circumstances of the case,

always of that vast throng whom the Saviour analyzes in a word when He gives command, "Neither cast ye your pearls before swine." Swine can't relish pearls. They are not made that way. They would rather have husks.

As to external, objective truth, as to theory in the abstract, there is no question of its accuracy or its unerring completeness. "What is written in the law" is all right. Because God wrote it. Its legitimate fruit is life. "The excellency of knowledge is that wisdom giveth life to them that have it." It is able to make all men "wise unto salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus." It is always "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto good works." Its purpose is perfection. Its counterpart completeness. But the way we read it—there comes the rub. We get it into all kinds of shapes. We distort it into all manner of ungainliness, into all degrees of depravity and baseness. Truth is a forest of large and lofty trees, each tree within it straight as a pine, perfect in outline as a balsam, firm as lignum-vitæ. But we hew these trees into all manner of timber; sometimes to build fairest structures of noblest deeds; sometimes to lay at foundations of dens of vice, of haunts of infamy. Truth is a quarry. The native granite is seamless and without a flaw. A perfect work of God. But with our drills and mallets and picks and chisels, we manipulate this vast

treasury of solid stone to totally different purposes. Sometimes we carve a column for costly cathedral and a block for the altar of God. Sometimes we pave broad roads to ruin, boulevards to hell. How we read it—that decides the eternities—that turns the hinge of destiny, that fixes all the future. “Woman or tiger, which ?” That famous question suggested an alternative as calm and placid as a midsummer sky compared with this—Truth, what are you going to do with it? Life or death, heaven or hell, bliss or despair, which ?

These are some of the ways we read truth fatally and falsely; as Peter expresses it, “wrest the scriptures to our own destruction.” While we read it without the enlightenment of the Spirit. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” The Spirit of God must help us, in our blindness, or we shall never see. He must open our eyes, or they are closed for all the eternities. Until He becomes our teacher truth is a strange language, and the Bible a sealed book. We read awry when we read truth with our prejudices, with our preconceived notions and preferences. When we make it say what we want it to say. When we accommodate it to our ideas and bend it to our theology. Or when we read it critically, and, with the penknives of pet theories, to cut out what we don’t like, and excise what we think God did not inspire because we don’t like to think so. When we become carvers and trimmers of

the word. Still more fatally we read what is in the law when we read it with bad and wicked hearts. When we look into it with what inspiration calls “an evil eye.” “If thine eye be evil,” says the Master, “thy whole body shall be full of darkness.” The truth gets into the cellar, and we can’t see it, because it’s dark.

The word to every immortal nature is that word of the Master to the lawyer at this time, when he has answered so accurately the first question, and left unanswered the other: “Thou hast answered right: this *do*, and thou shalt live.” What faultless theorists, what grand theologians, that whole tribe of Pharisees and Scribes were, of whom this lawyer was one! You couldn’t find a flaw in their philosophy, nor a crack in their creed. But they were a miserable set. All the severe words the Saviour had to say fell like thunderbolts on their heads. He transfixed them for all the ages with this barbed spear: “Ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” In inmost spirit, serpentine. Made for the pit. Because they read that law so perfect, and constructed that theology so ethereal, with bad hearts in their bosoms and baseness in their souls. These strainers at gnats when they discussed a theological point, swallowed camels when it came to daily living, Horrified at heresy, they could cut a Samaritan on the street, and cavil and quarrel with the Christ.

“How readest thou?” If the truth shall perform

her perfect work, we will hold a conversation with this soul within us, and say, Read, thou soul, with the enlightenment of the Spirit Who gave the truth, and Who alone can imbed it in immortal planting in this life of thine for immortal fruitage. Read it without thy prejudices. Not attempting to put in what thou pleasest, but to be pleased with what is there for the finding. Take the whole truth without abridgement or supplement. Just what the Lord has said. No more and no less. And read it with an eye single, with a heart clean and pure. Doing "the will of thy Father Who is in heaven" and then thou shall "know of the doctrine." A Christ life is the clearest lens with which to look into the mighty depths of truth, and penetrate its far-off recesses. The clearest-eyed Reader truth ever had was He Whose "meat and drink (was) to do the will of Him that sent Him." He had an eagle eye to look right into the sun of truth, because He had within Him a pure heart and a consecrated soul. When His life flows into us, when we see as He saw, because we feel as He felt, and love as He loved, we won't make any mistakes. Then we shall not look with our prejudices or our imperfections, but with our hearts. And hearts, when rightly keyed, hearts, when the heavenly harmonies play upon their strings, never make mistakes, never see awry, never read wrong.

I Cor. XII: 31. Yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

THE burning question of the hour is the question of wise temperance reform. The crying evil of our times is the saloon. The immediate, the vital peril of our institutions is the thirst for strong drink. How to effect this wise reform; how to close the saloon; how to repress this destroying passion; this is the issue of the day: it is the all important question on which public morals and public security alike are hinged. I would like to consider with you this question in all earnestness and in all solemnity at this time.

We stand then, in our thought this hour, in the immediate presence of the crowning peril of our land, and of the age in which we live. We look and we see the young, the middle-aged and the old alike falling on the right hand and on the left, victims of the great destroyer. The records of our Courts of Justice, the ruin of brightest hopes and fairest prospects, the degradation of manhood, the dishonor and shame of womanhood, homes made desolate and hearths made bare—we bring all these to day and we lay them at the door of this mother of iniquity, this parent of crime. We stand at the gate of the prison wall. We hear its story of vice and crime; we look on the faces

of its inmates, marked and wrinkled with their shame, and we ask, What brought them here? We knock at the door of our asylums, and we ask, What caused these scenes of suffering, what ruthless robber stole away the brain, and made reason mad? We see along the city's streets the thousands who are homeless and houseless, begging the crust of bread; the infant of days, whose only utterance this side the eternities is the wail of want, the cry of desolation; the old man, tottering, helpless, imbecile; and we ask, Why this destitution, why this revolting scene of beggary and need? And from all alike there comes one answer; to each mystery that confronts us we find one common key. The appetite for strong drink has impelled the hand of crime, and filled our prisons and penitentiaries; has mastered noble intellects and crowded our asylums; has consumed the rewards of honest labor, and thronged our streets with beggary, and brought to our doors an army of tramps. Standing before these scenes, we say with Shakespeare's Cassio: "O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil."

Confronted by this alarming presence we are to consider the all-important question: How shall we meet the enemy, panoplied and armored for his overthrow? Shall we do it with divided counsels, with battalions fighting among ourselves, or shall we meet him with solid phalanx, one undivided resistless host? As the enemy meets us every time.

"The children of this world," said the Master, "are wiser in their generation than the children of light." In our recent history in this commonwealth, this populous, Empire State, that declaration of the Master has been indisputably and alarmingly proved. We have twice joined issue with the enemy on this question. And, on both these bloodless fields, they have shown themselves the *wiser*. They have been the wiser and the shrewder by far in this that they met us in each campaign an unbroken column, while we stood before them a divided cohort, prohibitionists in one line, high license men in the other, and they drove us to the wall. The two decisive conflicts of our recent history were waged, in one canvass by the one political party, in the other by the other, so that I shall be acquitted of all partisanship in my analysis of the heated and the fatal encounter.

In 1883 the Democratic party nominated at the head of its ticket Mr. Maynard, as candidate for Secretary of State. He was an acknowledged and an avowed temperance man. The issue was joined on that question. The Brewers and Maltsters sent forth their printed circul-lars throughout the State, advocating the defeat of Mr. Maynard on this ground. The Distillers put forth their efforts, and exerted their influence, in the same direction. The saloons were a unit against him. What was the result of the canvass? You will all remember that the entire state ticket of the Democracy was that year elected by a considerable plurality, with the exception of Mr. Maynard, who

was honorably and manfully defeated. Meeting what Mr. Depew has so appropriately termed "a victorious defeat." He remained true to his colors, he stood by his record, and the rum power of the state smote him and laid him low.

This year the issue was joined again, and, the political parties being reversed, the result of the conflict of opposing forces was the same. David B. Hill, whatever his personal predilections, whatever his political affiliations, for of these I have nothing here to say, was supported by the liquor interests of the State, and was the candidate of the saloons,—as one of his most ardent supporters expressed it, in the issue between the churches and the saloons. Mr. Warner Miller accepted that issue, and manfully and heroically asked the support of the churches, and bade defiance to the saloons. In fifty counties of this State, with matchless moral courage, he presented unfalteringly and distinctly that issue. In the pure atmosphere of our rural towns, and in the slums of our great cities, in all alike he grappled with the enemy, and courted defeat, if defeat it should be, at the hands of the rum power. And he was defeated. President-elect Harrison carries the State by 14,335 plurality; Mr. Miller loses it by 19,133; he is behind his ticket 33,468 votes. The vote in the State for Mr. Jones, the Prohibition candidate, was 30,213, which vote cast for Mr. Miller would have elected him by a plurality of 11,080. On this most unfortunate result of the canvass I base my appeal and my prom-

ise to the Prohibitionists to-night. A vote cast into the air would have defeated the candidate of the liquor interests of the State, and would have retired to private life the pet of the saloons.

Can we afford, in the presence of a foe so cemented in closest union, so joined in solid phalanx, can we afford longer to meet him with divided counsels and separate battalions, and be driven every time he attacks us to the four winds? When we remember what the success of the rum power imports, the story of ruin and death it entails, the fatal blow it strikes at public virtue and private morals, dare we commit this folly in the coming years that has been our defeat and our overthrow in the years that are passed? Is there not an immorality involved if we permit the children of this world to continue wiser than the children of light, when they have shown us so clearly what true wisdom is? When they have proved such competent and such forcible instructors? Will it not sink to the degree of positive vice to remain divided, where division means, every time, more saloons and freer rum?

If division is sin, then how shall we be united? Shall the mountain come to Mahomet, or shall Mahomet come to the mountain? Shall 650,000—and I think I may add to this number 150,000 who voted for Mr. Hill, because he had received the regular nomination of his party, but who, if party interests and political considerations were laid aside, would

cordially support high license, and would cast their vote as heartily and as enthusiastically as we for the churches as against the saloons,—shall 800,000 of the voters of the State of New York come to one twenty-sixth their number, or shall 30,000 come to twenty-six times their multiple? Which is common sense? Which is ordinary, unimpassioned, cool-blooded reason! The position of the twelfth juror is proverbial, who is insufferably annoyed by eleven obstinate men. This is a case of the twenty-sixth juror, who expects twenty-five to step over gracefully, and without longer obstinacy, to his side.

Inasmuch as the resources at the command of the common enemy are so vast; because there is so much money and such willingness to use it in open bribery and the direct purchase of votes, to the destruction of the best interests of our commonwealth, to the peril of our homes, to the ruin of many of the brightest and most promising of our young men, may I not utter an appeal for unity of action to-night, for harmony of counsel, that will be heeded and that will be heard? Shall we not stand side by side, Prohibitionists and High License men, in this alarming, this fearful, this fateful encounter? My prohibitionist friend replies, as nearly as I understand his position, hitherto refusing to unite with us of the high license advocacy, securing thereby our defeat in the last canvass, expecting some day the mountain to come to Mahomet, the 800,000 to the 30,000, in a twofold answer. First, he tells us that High License does not restrict. Now I

will not go into the statistics of this subject to-day. Suffice it to say that having studied these statistics with some care, I am willing to stake my accuracy of information on the statement that a system of high license, wherever it is faithfully enforced, reduces the sale and the consumption of intoxicating liquors, in comparison with laws of prohibition, as four to one. The comparative efficiency of the two systems, I believe, as a matter of statistics, to be in this ratio.

But I meet this objection of my prohibitionist opponent, whom I want for my co-worker, on a still more unanswerable ground. As I said to a personal friend on election day, I believe the wisest thing to do in the presence of an enemy is to find what he wants you to do, and then do just as nearly as you possibly can the *opposite thing*. If High License laws do not restrict and restrain, and in a measure prevent and prohibit, why stands the entire liquor interest of the State in serried column, and with aimed guns, when a measure of this character is proposed? Why does a movement in this direction set brewers and maltsters and distillers crazy, and enlist the bitter hostility of every saloon from Montauk Point to the shores of Lake Erie? When a bill embodying the system of high license has passed the Legislature, and lies before the Governor in the Executive Chamber, why is he besieged by the allied forces of lager and rum, and finds no sleep for his eyes nor slumber for his eyelids, until he writes a veto such that he never deserves to sleep well again? And when the issue is joined, as in

November, in a State campaign, why are maltsters and brewers and distillers, saloons and their money, all on one side? There must be something alarming, something portentuous in this high license system, and, as was said of a certain statesman, I say of this system of High License, "I love it for the enemies it has made." Our great enemy, the Rum Power of this State, mighty, strongly armored, ready for battle, our enemy seeks the defeat, is willing to spend any amount of money to compass the defeat, of laws of this character. As a wise, as a judicious, as a safe principle of war, I repeat, Find out what the enemy wants, and then do just the other thing. Don't go over to him, body and soul, and do just what he wants you to do.

The second objection to unity of counsels and to harmony of action on the part of our prohibition friends is more serious in its character, and demands most thoughtful and careful consideration. It is the moral objection, and it is urged in all sincerity and candor, I will not doubt, by many most worthy and excellent people. Because of this moral objection that has seemed to stand in their path as an insurmountable barrier to all unity of action, those who entertain the objection have allowed the conflict with the enemy, again and again, to go by default. If the objection applies, if it is well and rightly grounded, then their action is justifiable, and their withholding of needed aid in this great battle with intemperance and lawlessness is the only manly and honorable

course. If we of the High License platform are conducting this warfare on *immoral* grounds, if our method of restriction is in its nature *sin*, then no conscientious, high minded Christian man can go with us in our warfare, however much we may need his help, or however fatal his withdrawal may seem to us to be. The objection that is thus urged so strenuously and so conscientiously is that a License law is an enactment on the statute books for the express purpose of *permitting an evil*. It is a law, our prohibitionist friend argues, that permits, and puts the authority of the court as a bulwark of defense around, a positive and unqualified social and moral wrong. Good may "come out of Nazareth," but it can't come out of a grog shop. I will put this objection, on moral grounds, so far as I may be able, in all its force, for if it applied in this case, as I shall endeavor to show that it does not, I should act upon it most resolutely, and should be found, with all my heart, in the prohibition ranks. The underlying principle of the Gospel of Christ, indeed of any system of morals, is that we are to make no compromise with evil, no alliance with wrong. "What fellowship," asks the apostle, "hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" They are antagonistic the one to the other. Between them there is no common ground of agreement. They wage, the one against the other, a war of extermination. One or the other is to be wiped out. Evil is Delilah. We are not to consent to her embraces. The Philistines are too near with their shears.

How, we are asked, shall we reconcile this requirement of the purest morals with the advocacy and support of a license law that winks at iniquity, and says, Pay me a license fee, and then sin? A law that says, Comply with certain legal stipulations, and then become a tempter and a seducer and a destroyer of your fellow men? Oil the hinge with legality, and then throw open the door that leads to the gates of death? Cover the steps with the Brussels of compliance with law, and then let them be the steps that lay hold on hell! Now this is high and worthy ground. The ground on which of all other I would desire to stand if the argument applies in this urgent and pressing case. At the same time I hope to impart to you my own confident and unwavering conviction that there is no connection whatever between this objection and the high license system to which we ask your support.



I Cor. XII:31. Yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

THE whole process of thought, in the objection urged by our prohibition friends, has arisen from the utter misnomer—a *license* law. Clinging to that word *license*, the conclusion has been erroneously and unjustly drawn that laws of this character have been enacted to *let* people sell liquor, and are therefore *sin*. If we could apply the true title to these laws, and term them, as they are, a heavy restrictive tax on the sale of liquors, instead of a permission to sell, I think much serious questioning in the minds of upright, honest people would have been avoided, and unity and harmony of action on this great question would have been long ere this secured. A high license law does not confer the right to sell intoxicating liquors. The right to sell liquor, as the right to sell dry goods, exists under the common law. If there is no law passed upon that subject the right is unquestioned. It exists prior to any particular statute. A high license law says, If you exercise this right to sell liquor, which is yours under the common law, we will put just as heavy a penalty upon you for its exercise as public sentiment will permit, \$5,000 or \$10,000 if the people will ratify our action. This right could be at once destroyed by the passage of a prohibitory law.

If public sentiment would enforce and sustain that measure, the right would no longer exist. But until public sentiment will do that, we will do the next best thing, and will make it just as expensive and just as burdensome to the liquor dealer and the liquor manufacturer as we possibly can, until, by the severity of our oppression and the weight of our tax, we drive them out of the business.

A high license law exercises the same function in our jurisprudence as whipping in school. We can't prohibit troublesome children from coming to school. So we whip them if they are bad. You wouldn't say that whipping is a compromise with turbulence and disorder. You wouldn't say that because we don't abolish troublesome children we are making "an agreement with death and a covenant with hell." These troublesome children in society, brewers and maltsters and distillers, and retail dealers—these we can't abolish and so we whip them with just as heavy taxes on their iniquity as we can. You do not think that is a compromise with evil, or an alliance with wrong, do you? No, neither do I.

Let me illustrate the subject and show the utter emptiness of this objection in the light of another intimate analogy. During the war, we had an extensive system of license laws, as an additional source of revenue to meet the exacting expenditures incurred by a causeless and wicked rebellion. A license law for the sale of intoxicating liquors to-day stands in the same relation as a license law for the sale of candy

during the war. That law did not confer the right to sell candy. That right existed before the law was passed. A prohibitory law could have been passed at any time to destroy that right to sell candy, and to prevent its exercise, if public sentiment would sustain it. The license law simply said, If you exercise this right to sell candy, which is yours under the common law, and which we do not propose to prohibit, we will require of you the payment of this tax for the support of the government. In strict analogy our high-license law says, If you exercise this right to sell liquor that is yours under the common law, a right we would destroy at once and utterly if we could, and a power we would prohibit did public sentiment permit, if you exercise this right, we will put upon you this penalty; we will assess this tax for the support of the almshouses and the penitentiaries and the state prisons that you, by your base and wicked commerce, make a necessity. Did those license laws during the Rebellion create the right to sell candy? Did they confer the privilege of the skillful manipulation of sugar, and the speedy destruction of teeth? You see the emptiness of the objection; you see its utter inapplicability. If I am doing all I can to restrain and hinder a man of thievish propensities, surely I am not striking a bargain with larceny and theft. If I am holding the reins as tightly as I can, I am not making a compromise with a runaway team. Thieves might be blown up with dynamite. But they are not. And while they are around, we will restrain

them just as rigidly as we may be able by penalties and prisons. Runaway horses might be annihilated by some mystic power when they began to run. But they are not. And so we will hold the reins just as tight as we can, and, with as rigid taxation as possible, command: Whoa. Had we the power of prohibition, would public sentiment sustain and enforce it, prohibition, it seems to me, would be the only path for our feet. A restrictive tax law would then be an ignominious and a shameful retreat. It would be a penalty where we could say, No. In the present state of society, and condition of public sentiment, we can't say, No, so we will say, in the spirit of stringent license, Just as little of this as possible.

Prohibitory laws may be passed and may be enrolled on our statute books from Maine to California. They may be appended with penalties, and may bristle all over with fines and imprisonment, but they are so much waste paper and spoiled ink, where society does not believe that what you would prohibit is positively, and inherently, and irreversibly wrong. The zealous republican might pass a prohibitory law that nobody in this land of ours should vote the democratic ticket, but so long as a large and influential portion of our citizens believed that that was a right and a virtuous thing to do, the democratic ticket would be voted, and our prohibitory law would be a dead letter. The anti-tobacco enthusiast may cry eagerly for enactments involving absolute and final prohibition, but, until you convince them it is wrong,

men will roll the sweet—I mean the bitter—morsel under their tongues, and the curling smoke will rise in calm defiance of all your laws.

Anti-masons, in their zeal that runs away with their discretion, may fill pages of foolscap with resolutions, they may, by some shrewd enginery, transcribe their denunciations in the statute books, and outlaw the enemy ; but, despite their enactments, masonry will still pursue the even tenor of its way, so long as society does not believe it is sin to have secrets and keep them, or to find harmless amusement with level and plumb and square.

On the other hand, we can easily enact prohibitory laws and enforce them, when that which they prohibit is universally recognized as sin. We do not need a license law for larceny, that shall say, You may steal if you do it gracefully and with taste. We can prohibit stealing, positively and unqualifiedly, because society has but one opinion about thieves. We need no license law for the incendiary, that shall say, We will permit you to burn our houses in broad daylight, when we are all out, and the insurance policy is double the value of the house ; or for the forger, that shall say, We will let you continue this chirography of yours, if you will write a graceful hand ; or for the murderer, that shall say, You may murder, if you will confine yourself to that large number, whom society can get along better without. We can bring all these at once within the sphere of prohibition. Here we can enact prohibitory laws and enforce them. We can

do so, because society says, with one voice, It is wicked to burn, and forge, and kill, and to this wickedness law must put a stop. But public opinion is not a unit to-day on the question of the liquor traffic. It does not put it side by side with theft, and house burning, and forgery, and murder and say, It must endure with these the penalties of the law. We may think public opinion ought to do this. But it don't. We have not lived very long, or we haven't spent the time very profitably if we have, if we are unaware that between what ought to be and what is there is often a vast and wide divergence. Men ought to be wiser than they are, and society ought to be better. But as the fact of the case, they are not. By the grace of God—and by the perversity of our natures—we are what we are. And we must legislate on that basis. It is love's labor lost to print statute books for hypothetical cases, or to multiply enactments for a condition of society up in the moon, where all may be supposed to have right ideas and correct opinions and lovely natures and pure hearts, so long as here on the earth ideas are distorted, and opinions awry, and natures crooked, and hearts perverse. We must legislate for society as it is, hoping to make it better by and by; and for men as they are, devoutly hopeful still that they may grow wiser in some better day.

I appeal therefore, again, to every honest prohibitionist to give the weight of his influence to these restrictive measures, that shall limit and restrain the sale of intoxicating liquors ; and I add to my appeal

the promise that every possible measure of prohibition shall receive our hearty and cordial and unwavering support, who are now laboring and voting for the passage of these laws, and who will be only glad to secure absolute prohibition at the earliest possibility. Under our system of Local Option, we will vote with you, everytime, for the Excise Commissioner who will grant no license in the locality in which we live. So securing, by our united effort, local prohibition. Under our Civil Damage statute, we will join our forces heartily to inflict the full penalty of the law for the injuries that are done by this traffic, whenever by overt act we may be able to trace them.

We will stand with you firmly and resolutely in the practice of total abstinence, that our example with yours may enlighten and uplift public sentiment, until, with one voice, it shall say in mandatory utterance, in puissant command, This base traffic shall now cease, this iniquitous trade we will prohibit throughout the length and breadth of this broad land, while from this tyrant passion, this master spirit of evil, we shall proclaim liberty to all the inhabitants thereof.

And then we add this agreement, in solemn promise also, that, apart from all party lines, as good citizens and solicitous for the welfare of the republic, we will, to the utmost of our power, labor to secure the passage of a Constitutional Amendment, State and National, forever prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage.

Permit me to urge once more with renewed emphasis the necessity of united counsels and concordant action, for the sake of which I make my appeal and give my promise, as I recall the fate of our last attempt in the legislature to secure the submission to the people of a Constitutional Amendment of this character.

The bill was defeated by some six or eight votes in our Assembly. In more than as many districts of the State, the legislator who voted against the measure was elected because the prohibition vote in his district was cast for a third candidate, which vote, had it been cast for the candidate in favor of the amendment, would have elected him and secured the passage of the bill. That is the reason we have not had the opportunity to vote on a Constitutional Amendment, prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors in the State of New York. Let us be admonished of the absolute necessity, the imperative need, of the hour. The Enemy stand over against us welded as one man, in one mighty phalanx. Let us stand together shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart, against him, and so go forth bravely and fearlessly to the fray, strong in each other, and strong in the God of battles.

John VI: 12. Gather up the fragments.

JHE miracle of the loaves and fishes was, in many respects, the most impressive and remarkable of all the works of majesty and power our Saviour performed. It was repeated, as you remember, on a second occasion, in precisely a similar manner. And that wonder Worker did not often repeat himself.

As an evidence of the impression produced, we read of those who became His disciples, “because they had eaten of the loaves, and been filled.”

They were a lazy, indolent class of people, who had come to the conclusion that, if they followed the Nazarene, they would no longer be compelled to work for a living, but that, whenever they were hungry, Jesus would assume the capacity of bread-maker, without grain or yeast, and feed them. They were not, however, encouraged to continue on that basis. Miracles were not for the lazy, nor displays of power for the listless and inert.

The Saviour, when recalling the miracle, directs especial attention to the “*fragments* which remained.” “How many baskets full of fragments took ye up?” He seems to urge this, as the decisive test of the miracle. It was not a deception. It was not a trick of yesterday. The multitude sitting there were not magnetized to think that they had eaten. There had been

an actual meal and a hearty one. For there lay the fragments, twelve baskets of them.

And there are other lessons, also, connected with this feature of the miracle, upon which the Master, with so much emphasis, insists. Let us attend to some of them to-day.

I. Observe, first of all, the reason the Master gave for this command, "Gather up the fragments." If that Master could supply bread by the loaf, and fishes by the thousand, so easily, why should He care about the pieces, left lying on the ground? The multitude didn't care anything about them. They had thrown them away. The disciples didn't think of them. Yet the Master said, Gather them up! And why? "That nothing be *lost*." Whatever might be His resources, however easily He could create, He would not suffer anything He had made to be wasted, nor the most trivial creation of His handiwork to be lost. When the Master manifested that interest in the fragments that remained, He was giving development to His divine nature just as truly as when He was creating the bread and the fish, omitting the intermediate processes of growing barley and heated oven, and kneaded dough, with no home for the fish in the bosom of the sea. It is the nature of that God revealed in Christ, to care for all that He has made, though but a crumb of bread or a piece of a fish, as constantly and as unweariedly, as, with wisdom and skill, originally to create and call into being and life. Until the material universe has accomplished its purpose and shall be

burned up, not an atom of which it is composed is allowed to perish, not a force that is once employed is ever spent, not an influence that is exerted ever dies away. Each alike is a ripple on the surface of that sea, whose receding waves are never still. This is but the scientific law, admitted in all our philosophy, of the "conservation of force." Forms of existence change; new relations are established; modifications are constant and transitions ceaseless; but the atoms with which they play are indestructible—the material they use is never lost. The ray of light that shines down to us from yonder sun, and then floats upon its way, has not fulfilled its mission, it has not finished its work. That ray of light will not be wasted. It cannot be lost. It will float on through this vast universe, bearing radiance to other realms, carrying light upon its bosom to other worlds than this, spanning the distance, it may be, between earth and sea green Sirius, among the remotest of the stars.

This is an established law of nature, impressed upon her mighty chart by that God of nature, who, when in the wilderness, bids disciples "gather up the fragments," who, in this vast universe, permits nothing to be wasted, nothing to be lost.

And this is His purpose, my friends, with us. No energy of ours is ever wasted; no effort we put forth is ever lost. Each word we speak leaps, at the utterance, upon an endless mission, measured only by the years of God. Who can estimate the tide of joy and cheer that pours forth from the silent recesses of a

word of kindness, the gentle accents of love? The leaven of a noble purpose, of a pure thought, of an honest life, put into the meal of character, moulds and works within it, and goes forth, in resistless influence, to other hearts and lives.

If these things be so, how momentous are the issues of our lives; how enduring and how lasting the destinies of the hour. Each thought we think, each feeling we entertain, each purpose we form, touches, in silent impact, the eternities. Each puts its finger to the battery of events, and calls forth the electric charge, whose force we can never measure, whose strength defies our calculations, whose story will be told only when the books are opened, and all thoughts revealed.

II. Observe, also, in this command of our text, the interest of the Master in little things. The multitude have started for their homes, and have left those fragments to the dogs, or to some wandering beasts of the desert. They will never give them another thought. The "fragments" were so unimportant, so trivial, so valueless. Such a little thing. Not so the Master. As the attitude of His being, as the posture in which He abides, God cares always for little things—He remembers the "fragments." It is He who watches the sparrow's flight. He who counts the hairs of our heads. Little things are with Him, in His wise control of all events, the hinges on which the greater are made, as majestic doors, to turn. They are the gateway to many

a stupendous issue, to many an eventful scene. They are the lever by which vast weights are lifted, and ponderous bodies poised in air. When the Andrews bring the Simons to Jesus, they know not the work the Simons, in after years, may do. When the Marys pour the ointment of their devotion on the Master's head, they know not the influence of their deed upon the generations to come, among whom it shall be recorded for a memorial of them. God can multiply "a word fitly spoken" so that, in the final solution of the problem, it will be a soul saved forever "out of the depths." A spark is seen falling on mortar, and, in the prolific thought of the inventor, the product is gunpowder, the agent of immeasurable results, the arbiter of many a destiny, the last appeal of nations. The steam engine, with all its ramifications in the practical arts and applied sciences, is born in the brain of that boy who sits, apparently so idly, watching the steam as it rises from the mouth of the tea kettle.

When the long, hard work of digging and delving was finished among the reefs and rocks of Hell Gate, New York; when the mine was set, and the moment for the explosion, terrible and terrific, had come, Gen. Newton led his little girl up to the battery, who, with soft and delicate touch, drew forth the electric charge that rove the rocks, that opened a pathway amid those high walled chambers for the vessel on its way, that shook, with its mighty convulsion, the hidden depths of the sea. So unseen forces many times,

and results immense and immeasurable, follow from the gentlest touch, the softest finger, of some unnoticed, unseen thing. It is the method, sublime and wonderful, of Him who uses the least and employs the humblest, and makes them the mightiest agencies of His will and power. Who “gather(s) up the fragments.” With Whom nothing is great, and, therefore, in Whose esteem, nothing can be small.

A woman touches the border of the Master’s hem. A touch is nothing, reasons Peter, in his impetuosity, in his ignorance of unseen forces. A touch is everything, reasons the Master, and He makes the woman well! I see Him standing, too, by the treasury. One and another passes and, in his wealth and opulence, casts into the treasury the golden coin. “Ah how liberal they are,” whisper the disciples. A poor woman, in her penury, puts in her mites. Pretty small contribution, murmur the disciples. But this is the word of the Master, who gathers up the fragments, and cares for little things: “Verily, I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury.” A paltry mite of copper excelled the gleaming talents of gold, because there was more self sacrifice behind it. As the voice of the Master is calling us to duty, and summoning us to toil, is the language of the unwilling prophet upon our hearts, and are we answering that we are but as a little child—least and lowest in the kingdom? Then, though we are but fragments, in the midst of vast and mighty agencies, it may be the

fragments that He will be pleased to employ, with which to work most wondrously to the upbuilding of His kingdom, and the triumphs of His grace. His power is the infinite multiplier. No matter how small the multiplicand. The product must be infinite.

III. Then we are thinking, in the third place, of that circle of twelve disciples engaged in a very menial and lowly task ; one that had in it no honor or dignity in their, or in the multitude's esteem. They are picking up the pieces. It is work they perhaps despise, and that takes away all the glory they had achieved when, proudly and confidently, they were dispensing bread from some unseen bakery by the loaf, and fish from some undiscovered sea by the score. And that lowly, humble task required incomparably more grace, with which to perform it willingly and to do it well, than did the nobler, grander work that sometimes fell to their hands.

When those disciples were sent forth to preach, and the multitudes hung upon their words ; when they came to the people, clothed with miraculous power, invested with their Master's own authority—then they were the cynosure of every eye, the envied of all who beheld. Such missions as these, it required very little grace to be willing to fulfil. Any man would have grasped at them. And they came back to the Master with words of exultation on their lips, surprised and wondering at their own successes. When, in this scene in the wilderness, they were commanded to take in their hands the bread and the fish :

when, as they began to distribute, the bread kept coming, and the fish, in adequate supply, those disciples were the observed of all observers. The Master was cast into the shade. Perhaps the twelve were exultant and lifted up by the impressiveness of the scene, and by the prominence of the part in that strange drama they were called to play. Perhaps they needed the subsequent toil of picking up the pieces to bring them down to a proper level of humility and self renunciation. And while they were doing that work, filling their baskets with the fragments, the multitude looking on with contempt, then was the time of their need, then was more grace given that they might do their work cheerfully, that they might obey the Master willingly, that they might serve Him faithfully and well, than when they were called to preach with an eloquence not their own, to heal with delegated power, to feed the assembled thousands until, supplied from unseen sources, the multitude were filled.

And always, my friends, it is the humble, lowly task, the menial, servile toil, that requires the noblest devotion, that develops the sweetest spirits, that manifests the most abundant grace. The voice that spoke so gently to the Syrian of old, speaks also to us, with all its inherent truth: "If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it?" Indeed we would, and we would have all been glad to. But the ordinary tasks, the humble, lowly toil of every day,—behind the counter, at the

work bench, in the kitchen, work such as the disciples are doing when they pick up the bread and the fish lying in fragments at their feet,—this, this calls for heroism, this demands devotion, this develops most the true disciple of our Lord. “If any man will be great among you, let him be your servant.” It requires more grace to be a doorkeeper at the White House than to be the President in the East room. It requires more grace to attend at the palace’ gate than to sit upon the throne within the palace’ walls. It is nobler sometimes to serve than to command. It may be a greater thing to be a good sexton than to preach a good sermon, or to sit in a desirable pew.

IV. And, as we close, we are thinking of the broken fragments of our hopes and plans. We think of them only in despair and sad discouragement. We moisten them with our tears. We leave them in the dust of cheerless gloom. But the Master, in some wise purpose of unchanging love, of love that makes no mistakes, says to His angels : “Gather up the fragments.” Collect those broken hopes. Bring together those baffled plans. Combine them in some gift of choicest blessing, of highest boon, to the troubled, downcast soul.

Ah, the fragments, the broken ends, the shattered, riven hopes, in these lives of ours—how many they are ! How thickly do they strew the ground ! We don’t know what to do with them. They seem to lie there purposeless, wasted forever, wholly lost. But, no ! An unseen Hand is gathering them while we are

so troubled and disturbed; invisible Love is putting them together; by and bye, when the work is done, we shall find, in glad discovery, that they have wrought out for us “the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” And then there will be no broken ends. No shattered, riven piece. No “fragments that remain.” In God’s restored and re-united handiwork, in His finished purpose, our lives will be complete, our hopes will find fulfillment, and so our hearts will be at rest—these hearts that are so restless until they find their rest in God. Then, and not till then, shall we be able to exclaim, in the dying words of the illustrious Dean of Westminster, “I am perfectly happy; I am perfectly satisfied.”



Phil. IV:11. I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

HAVING learned this lesson, in what striking contrast does the apostle stand with man in his normal condition. How different the ripeness of that Christian experience from human nature, as you find it the world over. Man, everywhere, and in all ages, is the child of dissatisfaction and discontent. Foreign writers of our day have often pronounced these traits of character peculiarly American. The American people, they tell us, so rapid in their growth, so intent upon the attainment of wealth, the land of the Vanderbilts and Goulds, the Sharons and Fairs, a people so fond, and yet so lavish, of their resources, are pre-eminently the dissatisfied, discontented nation of the day. The charge is, in a measure, true. Our people, as a rule, and perhaps distinguishingly, whether in the mart of commerce and of trade, or in the halls of science and polite learning, whether you take the workman at his bench or the scholar among his books, are struggling untiringly, to excess, toward something higher and better, toward more marked achievement, and more substantial and lasting results. Throughout the land, pervading the activity of our people, there is ceaseless, constant, corroding, unrest. But this is only a part of the truth.

Turn where you may, to what nation of the earth you will, back to what period of history you please, and the same spectacle meets your gaze, the same controlling tendency inheres. At the fountain of human history, in its first beginnings, it was discontent—a desire for a knowledge they did not possess and that they would have been ten thousand times better off if they never had—this that led our first parents into sin, that made us a race of sinners. Discontent, on the plains of Babel, built its tower, confounded the tongues, and scattered the builders. And over each page of history, as man has lost the present and misimproved it in his aspirations toward the future; ceaselessly struggling, longing for something that seems better beyond—over each page of that history this may be written as the substance of its contents: Dissatisfaction, discontentment, unrest. It is the long and weary pursuit of the fabled gold at the rainbow's base,—the pursuer lured on and on, the gold always far ahead.

As Spenser puts it :

"Full little knowest thou that hast not tried,
What hell it is in suing long to hide ;
To lose good days that might he better spent ;
To waste long nights in pensive discontent ;
To speed to-day, to he put back to morrow ;
To feed on hope, to pine with fear and sorrow.
To fret thyself with crosses and with cares ;
To eat thy heart with comfortless despairs ;
To faune, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,
To spend, to give, to want, to he undone."

You find the tendency of which I speak implanted,

growing, in the hearts of the young. The pleasures of childhood are chilled by the thought of how much better it will be, and how much happier they, when they shall be men. When the years of childhood are passed, the disposition has grown with our growth, and strengthened with our strength. In this sense, we do not "put away childish things." Rising manhood and womanhood are stripped of their full vigor, divested of their highest, noblest purpose by idle musings of what *may be*—thoughtless of what *is*. And then when old age has come, and the strength and vigor are gone, and gone forever, there remains the gnawing of discontent over the little that has been accomplished, the less in that hours were devoted to idle aspirations, to vain, illusive hopes, in which, had hand and heart proved faithful, more would have been achieved. Neither do we see this spirit of discontent more largely developed where we would expect, in the circumstances of the case, especially to find it. It is not confined to the hovel of the poor, to the hours of hard wrought labor so illy remunerated at the work bench or in the shop. Its dwelling place is not peculiarly with those whose condition in life is lowly, or their station humble or obscure. Rather you will find it more seldom, less active, here. The principle of its operation seems rather to be, that the more we have, the better circumstanced in life we are, the more dissatisfied, the more restless, are we with the lot in which Providence has placed us, the more do we long and despondingly dream of something better beyond.

“Poor and content”—reasons the hero of the dramatist—“is rich, and rich enough.” Ah the wealth, though men call him poor, the wealth, the opulence, of the man who is “shut up in measureless content.”

* * * “Verily
* * * 'tis better to be lowly born,
And range with humble lives in content,
Than to be perch'd up in glistering grief,
And wear a golden sorrow.”

For, many times in life, you may turn from the luxury of the abode, where all that wealth can give is found, and having read the story of discontentment there, of weariness with pleasure, of surfeit with excess, of constant search for some new and undiscovered joy, go to the cottage with few rooms and small, the board frugal and spare, and find at last the angel of the house—content. There is many a man who has plied the anvil from boyhood to old age, and found satisfaction the while in the strong arm, the vigorous stroke, the healthy, though comparatively inactive brain. An ox takes more delight in a pasture field, than an epicure in choicest viands. The street Arab enthuses ten-fold more in the finding of a dollar on the sidewalk, than a Jay Gould in turning an easy million in the Stock Exchange.

As an inseparable element of this spirit of discontent, present enjoyment is invariably lessened, often wholly lost. Pleasure is sought, not in present duty performed, where alone it can be found, but rather in hopes of the future, in dreams of better days. Labor

becomes irksome, honest toil a burden, because so inferior, in comparison to an imagined blessing, some fancied condition in life yet to come. The bird in the hand is let go, for the two in the bush that may never be caught. The comfortable abode of present satisfaction is left behind, and men live in the cold of idle hope and useless fancy, until fortune may find them a palace.

The question then arises, what is the secret or cause of this prevailing spirit of discontent, which is sapping the foundations of all true happiness and honest enjoyment, and how may it be remedied or removed? I think the answer is that it is due to an erroneous conception of greatness, toward which so many, in the race of life, are struggling, and to which so many hope some day to attain. All, in one sphere of action or another, in one way or another, all desire to rise. If man understood true greatness, that desire would be the noblest aspiration of the soul, the purest religion. Here then we find the hinge, upon which this whole subject turns. It is the answer to the question, What is true greatness, the highest excellence? And the answer will perhaps more readily be suggested by contrast. Greatness, then, as men look upon greatness, as men struggle and toil toward its attainment, consists in some position of influence or superiority, some station of honor and trust among their fellow men. True greatness consists in faithfulness in the position, however humble or obscure, in which we are now placed. Earthly greatness consists in what we

have, a certain amount of money, or influence, or in official place. True greatness in what we *are*. An honest, upright coal carrier is greater than a dishonest, wicked king. In the intercourse of men, and the tide of human events, it often occurs that men of very inferior stature in intellect and morals are standing on the giddy height of prosperity and fame, while many of far nobler worth are treading the plains below. But they on the summit are no greater, because they are higher up. True greatness does not depend upon *where*—but always and only upon *what*—a man is. In the scales of the eternities, money, office, fame, are flung high in air; while truth, endurance, honesty, faith, these are the heavy weights—these count in the tons. A pure soul, though it exhales its atmosphere of sanctity amid scenes of poverty and reproach, though clothed with rags and dwelling in a hovel, is always great. A mean spirit, a narrow mind, though “clothed with purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day,” though seated on a throne, and dwelling in a palace, is always small. A ball is not made larger by throwing it into the air. Neither are men, whom some sudden turn of fortune has hurled, as it were, into popularity and fame. Greatness is independent of circumstances. It is unchanged by the changes of time. A great man, whose greatness is in himself, will be great everywhere, take him where you will. He will be great as a chimney-sweep, sweeping his chimneys clean, and sweeping them conscientiously. Great in the meanest toil, peform-

ing it grandly, in faithfulness and truth. Things the most trivial, efforts the most despised will be lifted to the plane of his own inherent greatness, and dignified with his own abiding worth. His innate nobility of soul will be everywhere a magnet, that will draw the coarsest iron up to himself. On the other hand, the man who has not that greatness in himself, who seeks it rather in where, than in what, he is, who expects to find it in some superior position, some higher plane, rather than in faithfulness in that position in which he stands, that man can never attain true greatness, succeed how he may. His soul is narrow, his intellect confined, his heart bound up in himself; he is small by nature, and he will be small, though he may ride smoothly upon the waves of fortune, or sit in some chair of state. It will be the old fable of the frog proposing to swell to the proportions of the ox. The distended sides will be insignificant in comparison with the envied ideal, and the effort will be fatal to the frog.

And yet it is the inferior, and not the higher and nobler, greatness of which we have spoken, toward which man is striving, and the hoped for attainment of which occasions the prevailing discontent, dissatisfaction, unrest, that are reigning in society. Men are not, as a general thing, discontented with what, but only with where they are. They are not impatient, restless to be better, but rather, just as they are, to get higher. Not to be good citizens, but legislators and governors and officers of state. Now this inferior

greatness, this greatness toward which men are generally found discontentedly aspiring—this greatness of externals, of position, popularity, or power—is that which, in the order of nature, but very few can attain. There are not enough seats in the legislature, there is not an adequate supply of gubernatorial honors, there is not a sufficiency of easy berths in the Custom House to go round. A very great many must be left out in the cold. In this lottery the majority hold blank tickets. What then should be the effect of this familiar fact of experience, this common lot of humanity? Should it be to discourage the aspirant, or to increase the prevailing spirit of discontent? No. But this rather. It should lead us, each one, to set before us in life a higher standard, and yet a standard that, though higher, we can all, the humblest and the weakest, attain. It should inspire us to aim not so much at a first position, as at a faithful discharge of the duties and responsibilities of the position, whether lower or higher, in which we are placed. To seek, in short, that truer greatness, which consists in what we *are*, rather than in what we *have*. When we thus aspire, we may set before us, for our example, the greatest man the world ever knew. Jesus never occupied a high position, after the estimation of men. All the associations of His life were lowly, and I may say, despised. He was born in a manger; He lived in Nazareth; He toiled in a carpenter shop; His pulpit was the wayside; He was penniless and homeless; He shared the contempt of the upper classes while He

lived; He hung on a Roman gibbet when He died. Pharisees condensed their unmeasured scorn in one word, and hurled it at Him with derision. "This!" leaving the blank to imagination.

And yet, in His greatness of soul, He was above all principalities and powers. That greatness was found in Himself. And when He described it, He said: "I am meek and lowly in heart." In the enjoyment of that, the Christ was satisfied. He was wholly content. Place before you that truer, that higher greatness—the greatness of Jesus, the greatness of God; listen to His word, as he says to dissatisfied, discontented, impatient man, "learn of me"—and He will give you rest. Becoming great as Jesus was great, you will be wholly content. And this is true ambition. Not the restless struggling for some vain chimera we will probably never attain. Not the folding of the arms, and dreaming of better days to come. But rather the aspiration that soars meekly, humbly toward excellence in the sphere in which we are moving, toward fidelity to the trusts already committed to our charge. And so only shall we be prepared for a higher sphere, or for larger trusts. In the affairs of men, he is promoted from one department of his employ to another, who establishes his claim by skill and ingenuity in a lower, never he who sits and sighs to be there. And this is the Master's word: "He who is faithful in that which is least, will one day be faithful in that which is much"—"will be ruler over ten cities." Only he, the faithful in the lowest and

the least, will have the opportunity to establish his fitness for higher things.

Until you and I, my friends, learn this lesson, life will be barren, our days a blank. It is this contentment that renders present duty a pleasure; that dignifies, exalts the humblest, lowliest life. It casts a halo around the feeblest effort. It places a crown upon the brow of the laborer, wherever the field of his toil. It makes religion what it is. "Godliness with contentment is great gain." "With contentment."



Rom. II:7. Patient continuance in well doing.

HIIS is Paul's idea of practical religion. He is expressing himself very plainly, and with all candor, to a class of people who are sadly failing to practice what they preach. Who are condemning other people for what they do themselves. People between whose words and whose works there is a divergence wide as the poles, and distant as the antipodes. Paul tells this class of people that there isn't any chance for them. They are doomed, however eloquent their preaching, however sound the advice they offer. "Thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" They can't get away from judgment by exhorting other men from sin. Said a friend of mine one day, I practice no vices in private that I do not in public. It was not especially to his credit that he made a display of that kind of property. But perhaps it was better than to cover and conceal. Hypocrisy involves a two-fold fracture of law, the sin, and the lie behind the sin. Advice, after all, does not go a great ways in the influence of soul upon soul. Men do not listen to what we are advising, but to how we are living. It is the easiest thing in the world to give advice. It is not so easy to put a life behind it. A Martha can advise a Mary to go to work, when she is doing her own with grumbling and discontent. A

Peter can ask: "Lord and what shall this do?" when the all essential thing is what he is going to do in the presence of the Master's severe and stern rebuke.

The Apostle is addressing himself to this strange anomaly in the text. He urges to personal and immediate responsibility. Each man for himself—confronting the eternities, and before God. He makes religion a personal thing—a reality of the inmost life—a part of our truer, better selves. It is an entity in the inmost texture of the human soul that God sees where no human eye can discover, and, when he sees it, adopts and signs with the seal royal of the kingdom for all the ages. In this connection the apostle gives us this admirable definition, this comprehensive analysis, of all religion that I have chosen for our thought to-day. "Patient continuance in well doing." A bias rightward. The statement meets two popular errors—errors of Paul's day, and errors no less of our own.

The first familiar error is that which makes religion a matter of belief or theory. Which misinterprets that class of scripture texts that present faith as the condition of acceptance as referring to intellectual conviction, mental reception of truth. It is the error against which the apostle James reasons so forcibly when he puts the decisive question: "Can faith save him?" That question that upset for years Martin Luther's exegesis. On this basis of theoretical belief in truth whole systems of theology have been elaborated, and have been ratified by ecclesiastical councils, and pronounced essential to salva-

tion. In the pharmacy of rigid and rigorous theology, the prescription has been prepared, all the ingredients carefully mixed, and the dose put to the lips of the faithful who shall swallow it without a murmur, or be lost. Now the only element of faith that gives it worth or reality is its tendency to go forth in action. Its nature to evolve. As James reasons, in that epistle, "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" Telling them to be warm don't do any good, if they are cold. Or telling them to be fed, if they are hungry. Theorizing don't meet the exigencies of the case. Words are only on the surface. Something must be done. Somewhere clothes must be found, and food furnished, or there will be shivering and starvation.

A man's theology goes a very little way in the make up of the man. The soundest theologians of history have been, many times, its vilest rascals. Henry VIII, that embodiment of British iniquity, furnished the Church of England its theology, and told archbishops and cardinals what to believe. The Duke of Alva, reddening the plains of Holland with blood, was sound on all the essential doctrines, and would have passed a first-class examination before a Presbytery. Those who burned witches in Rhode Island were in the direct line from the Pilgrims of Plymouth Rock, and no ship ever carried more theology than the May-

flower. That historic ship has supplied the pulpits of a continent, and held them to the moorings of eternal truth. Yet believers in that theology, in the fanaticism of the hour, kindled martyr fires and shed innocent blood. It is a very useless procedure to examine a man or a woman who applies for church membership on questions of doctrine, on issues of theology, because that tells so little of what a man or a woman is. Doctrine has so little to do with duty. What a man believes with what a man is. What he evolves in theory with what he does in daily life.

Then a second popular fallacy, as false as the first, is that salvation and eternal life are extraneous rewards, something like a price paid, or as wages rendered. So much goodness and so much glory. In contradistinction from this frequent and familiar conception I do not think it can be too strongly or too repeatedly urged, as the fact of human life, that reward and punishment are natural processes, the normal effects, of which what we are is always the efficient and the final cause. We grow into the one or the other by the necessity of our natures, by the irresistible propulsion of what we are. We grow into what the Bible calls life, or what it calls death, into eternal states of existence, as conditions of our inmost selves, as the atmosphere and the mould of our own imperishable being. You put a bad man at a bound in heaven and he would be utterly miserable, because he was bad. You put a good man in hell and he would be blessed, because he was good. This nature of ours is

a seed of endless and deathless possibilities; in the eternities it grows into its own maturity and ripeness—the maturity and ripeness of its own inherent essence, and that will be heaven or that will be hell. This soul within us is a bud that will blossom as a lily in the garden of God, because it is a lily of peerless white; or it will bloom as deadly nightshade in the pathless dark because in its nature it is nightshade. You couldn't change nightshade and lily by changing their places where they pour forth sweetness or exude poison. Locality and place have very little to do with these deep realities of soul—these inmost truths of being. These natures of ours, moulded by the mighty spirit of Light, and Life and Love, are the many mansions; or, left untouched by celestial influences, these natures within us are the lake and the fire and the worm. A wicked nature—eternally wicked; what a lake that is! How dark, how bottomless! A bad heart—eternally bad; what a destroying fire! How it burns and blisters and consumes! A perverted spirit—eternally perverse; what a gnawing worm! How it writhes and withers and wrecks! And what a mansion of light and life is a soul redeemed, delivered, disenthralled!

As the thought of our theme to-day the life that is eternal is the normal effect, the inevitable product, of a process of soul. It evolves from the inmost outgoings of aspiration and desire as the normal and natural result. God gives eternal life, but He gives it as He gives fruit to the tree, or

grain to the field, or fragrance to the flower--as the results of causes that produce them that are inherent, that He has put into the essence and nature of the thing. There is some mystic entity, intangible and unseen, in the tree that becomes, in its unfolding and resistless operation, fruit, in the field that ripens into grain, in the flower that wafts itself in fragrance. In the soul, that is life and heaven. These are the fruitage, the maturing, the aroma of spirit.

If we are asking ourselves, in silent thought, to-day, whether we are really on the way to heaven, back of all professions, behind and beneath all outward, visible relations in Zion, the answer lies simply here: How are we living? What is the inmost trend and tenor of our souls? It has very little to do with the question: What system of theology we believe, the standard of what ecclesiastical organization we accept as authoritative, whether we like John Calvin or John Wesley better. Neither has this question that goes deep down into our souls and probes to the inmost core very much to do with the problem whether we have entered a race where a prize is offered, or have proposed to fight a battle where a crown is given, but are we running that race that is itself the prize, are we fighting that battle that is itself the crown, are we living Godward to-day?

Religion is the most natural thing in the world, while it is the one thing supernatural. It does not consist in spasms or hysteria. There

are seldom hours like that before Damascus' gate. And have you ever thought how little that wonderful experience at the gate of Damascus would have amounted to in the life of that gallant captain, the flash, or the light, or the voice, or the fall, had their not followed those quieter, calmer moments, when, as the result of thoughtful, mature reflection during three long days in Damascus, those scales fell from the eyes and Paul *saw*, and a soul had clear vision. Had there been nothing but the scene before the gate that has become so historic, and that so many have "perverted as they do the other scriptures to their own destruction," had there been nothing but that, the central figure of that thrilling scene would have been, as the lone effect of it, simply a blind man, groping in darkness. That is all. The three days that followed, days of meditation, thoughtfulness and prayer, brought him into the light. All this only went to show that religion does not consist in marvellous experience, in sudden rhapsody, in scenes of Arabian nights adventure. These are of the nature of fable, not of the essence of faith. Religion is simply doing right. Heaven is doing right forever. Happiness is in the doing. The doing is the crown, the sceptre, the mansion, the throne, the walls of adamant, the streets of gold, the broad boulevards of glory.

No words could be used more free from anything like extravagance, or supernaturalness, than these words I have quoted from the apostle as my

text. We may take them into our thought as his definition of religion, his outline of Christianity, to-day. "Patient continuance in well doing." Three things are vividly and clearly pictured in the apostle's thought.

First: "*well doing.*" This is intensely practical, and opens the door to our daily, hourly life. It leads in the direction not of wonderful experiences, or great occasions, but to habitual self control, and the calm, deliberate management of this nature that is in us, and that we must govern and guide and make better and purer and sweeter day by day. "*Well doing*" in our departments of business, as we are honest, reliable and true. In our pleasures and enjoyments, as we select them wisely, and as ministers to our nobler and better selves. In our homes, as we are considerate and clement and kind. In society, as we are helpful and gentle and sweet. "*Well doing*" everywhere and amid every environment, every fitful, changeful surrounding in life.

"*Continuance in well doing.*" There is no place in Paul's ideal for evanescent, butterfly disciples. There is no taking hold of the plow here, and looking back. No returning "to bid farewell to them of our father's house." Ephemeral piety is a vapor, vanishing with the morn. Paul is thinking of an atmosphere, pervading as space, and as enduring.

"*Patient continuance in well doing.*" When we get this idea of religion into our minds and into our hearts, we realize at once that there are difficulties to

surmount, impediments to overcome, hindrances to hurl from every upward path. There wouldn't be much difficulty in living a religion that simply consisted in staying in a kind of Theological Seminary, masticating creeds and digesting confessions; or in accepting a religion that was constituted wholly in taking a crown, or grasping a palm, or baring the brow to the laurel, at the end of a race. But Paul's religion necessitates struggle. It is, in its nature, war. There are enemies to conquer. There are barriers to cast down. There are hostile influences to overcome. All these lie in the way of "*well doing.*" These are the rocks and the pitfalls. "*Through patient endurance*" we shall surmount them. This is the "*trying of our faith*" that "*worketh patience*"—"*that patience may have her perfect work.*" James says he counts them "*happy who endure.*" Happy because they have found the supreme attainment; *blessed* because they are *religious*.

Some one, perhaps, is saying just now: And so Paul has left out Christ, and is preaching only a religion of morality, or the preacher to-day has misinterpreted Paul, and set him in a wholly false relation. Let us see. Into this religion of well doing I think the Christ enters, and within this ideal of the apostle dwells, in two ways alike all important and alike essential. First as our Example—the one Child of man who ever from the cradle to the grave did right all along, and so lived this religion. Scribes and Pharisees were troubled about

His morality. They were afraid He was going to lower the standard—as they expressed it, that He had come “to destroy the law.” He didn’t wash his hands with sufficient system or regularity. He didn’t keep the Sabbath after their fashion. He was too intimate with sinners. He was a high liver. Well, He didn’t attend to these things very scrupulously. He was somewhat careless about them. But He was the most moral Man the world ever saw. The best development of manhood. The Supreme Ideal. In the words He spoke, in the life He lived, it was true as He said that He “came not to destroy the law but to fulfill.” Into this religion of well doing, therefore, the Master comes as our Example.

But far more than that, He comes into this ideal religion as our alone Enabler. By whose grace alone this religion is a possibility. When we come to the method, how we are to live this life, how to actualize this religion, then we come right to the Master’s holy feet. We pass from the moral element, which is common to all religions, to the spiritual, which is found alone in the religion of the Christ. All religions tell us we must do right. Only the religion of the Christ tells us how to do it. All other religions, in the last analysis, confront us with the great impossibility: A lost soul doing right. Only the religion of the cross presents the eternal possibility of faith: A lost soul saved, and so, as the unfolding of its new nature, doing right by irresistible propulsion. The cry of every other religion on God’s

earth is, "who is sufficient to these things?" The answer of christianity to the world's hope, to the aspiration of all souls, is this: "My grace is sufficient for thee." I am inclined then to think that this is substantially Paul's theology: Religion is doing right, all the while, patiently, by the grace of God in Jesus Christ, through Whom alone we can rise to this supreme realization, by Whom alone we can be religious.



Mark II: 27. The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath.

THE Sabbath Committee of the Womans' Christian Temperance Union desire the several pastors to present at this time the all important subject of Sabbath observance. I cheerfully comply with this request, and trust I may be able to impress upon our minds the vital interests, and the wide-embracing duty, this theme suggests. I have selected, as my text, these words of the Master that were uttered in refutation of the prevalent Pharasaic idea of the nature and obligations of the day. The discussion arose from the act of His disciples, as they went through a field of corn and plucked "the ears of corn on the sabbath day." The Pharisees, at once, pronounce it *sin*. They denounce the Master and the twelve as Sabbath breakers. The Saviour does not condescend to reason with them at any great length, in refutation of the charge, but, having referred to the example of David, in the days of Abiathar, the priest—David, whose morals no Pharisee would call in question—the Master asserts without qualification His absolute authority: "The Son of Man is Lord, also of the sabbath." It is a part of His dominion. It belongs to His eternal Kingship. As Lord of it, and supreme Master, He announces this underlying and basilar principle:

“The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath.” The prevalent idea of the time was that man lived to keep the Sabbath. The Master’s idea was that man kept the Sabbath in order to live.

The Sabbath, as the Jew conceived it, was largely ceremonial. In the Master’s thought, it was moral and spiritual. The Jew worshipped the shell; the Master the kernel. The Jew knelt before a corpse; the Master vitalized the living soul. He destroyed ceremony; He fulfilled law. He absorbed the one; He lived the other. So both were fulfilled, and He came, as He said, “not to destroy the law but to fulfil.” He fulfilled ceremony by realizing and actualizing it; He fulfilled morality by living it. The Sabbath, as a ceremonial institution, as a fixed day of the week that, as to minutest and most trivial detail, must be observed in a certain way, and after a cast iron pattern, He did away. So he made Himself liable to the accusation that he was a Sabbath breaker. He was, as those accusers interpreted the Sabbath. He did break over and over, and ruthlessly, and all to pieces, the only Sabbath of which they had any conception; the ceremonial, ritual Sabbath, unalterably fixed on Saturday, perfunctorily kept. As “Lord of the sabbath” He exploded that Sabbath into air, and shattered it into fragments. There was nothing left of it. It was under the heel of its “Lord.” But the Sabbath, as a seventh portion of time, devoted to the pure service of God, that Sabbath He ratified and confirmed, and so, in the deepest, most vital sense, “came

to fulfil the law.” That pure, true Sabbath of rest and service was more sacred and more obligatory than since the day it was decreed on Sinai, “Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.” The casket was thrown away, but how brightly the jewel within it shone! The scaffolding was torn down, but how symmetrical the building!

The law thus fundamental, thus imbedded in human life, has been changed in its application, under the new dispensation, from Saturday, the day on which the Lord rested from all His work, to Sunday the day on which He rose from the dead. Perhaps, among other reasons, to show that there is nothing in the day, and everything in the principle. It was changed as to the day, almost unconsciously, and, as it seems, in recalling the historic fact, almost unintentionally as well. And yet the change was ratified by the personal presence, and sanctioned by the immediate blessing of our Lord who had declared that He was “Lord even of the sabbath day.” The ten disciples are met in that upper room of Jerusalem on the first day of the week. It is two days, or, as the Jesus reckoned time, it is the third day, since their Lord was crucified and buried. They meet to mingle their sympathies over a dead faith. They have seen, as they think, the end. And they come to mourn and lament over it. Into their presence there steps, mysteriously and majestically, their risen Lord. He speaks the familiar word. They recognize it and rejoice. It is the watch-word of christianity, on the sentinel line of the ages,

“peace,” “peace.” They meet the next week, on the same day, in glad remembrance of that first day of the week when they saw their Lord. He comes to them again. He ratifies and confirms the act. And they observe the day ever after. They have fallen into it without intent. They have been led directly by the Spirit of God, and have been attended by the visible presence of their risen and triumphant Lord. Henceforth the Sabbath of the christian shall be the Lord’s Day—no longer the day He finished creation, but the day He sealed redemption. It thus distinguishes and individualizes our christian faith. Judaism observes the seventh day, and thereby commemorates the material creation. Mohammedanism observes Friday, and signalizes, as it believes, the creation of man. Christianity selects, by the appointment of its Lord, the first day of the week, and recalls the spiritual creation of all souls.

The Sabbath, the seventh portion of time, as thus ordained of God from the day He rested from His labors—from the time when it was said “the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it,”—as our Saviour declares in the text I have selected “was made *for* man.” It is a means, not an end. An instrumentality, not an amulet. A chart, not a charm. The question of Sabbath observance, therefore, to which our attention is turned to-day by the Sabbath Committee of the W. C. T. U., is a question that pertains not so much to the Sabbath as to man. Not so much to the sanctity of the day, as to the welfare of human-

ity. As the truth and the import of our Saviour's words, the day that is thus hallowed and set apart is to be observed, not for anything in itself, but in order to develop and uplift and bless mankind. The one decisive issue then is, How shall we make the Sabbath most a blessing to those around us, and most a benediction in our own hearts and lives? Every man is to answer that question for himself, in the light of his own conscience, and before God. I for myself. You for yourself. I can't answer that question for you and and you can't answer it for me. I can give you my ideas, as I propose to to-day. You might give me yours, except that I have the advantage of you on this occasion that I always have, that I can say what I please, and you can't say anything back. As usual, I have the floor. But neither you nor I can dictate in this matter. Neither you nor I can command. We can counsel only, and advise. There is no authority on this subject but conscience, enlightened by Christ. Paul insists with vigorous emphasis upon this view I have expressed, as he writes to the Colossians: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days." Paul places the Sabbath in the class of questions that are relative, and dependent always upon individual views, and personal conviction. The class of questions, where one has a right to differ from another, and is just as good a man as though he agreed. The fundamental principle is set before us, clearly and distinctly, and we must exercise judgment

and common sense and what degree of grace God gives us in its application. The Sabbath is made for man. We must bring every question of casuistry and conscience to this all comprehensive, this infallible test: There is often too much of the spirit that asks with reference to each particular thing : Is it right or is it wrong on Sunday ? We ought to have that intense hold upon this principle, the seventh portion of time hallowed and set apart to make us better and purer and more spiritual, that every question of this character would be dissolved in the focus of its burning light. This should be always the acid that would precipitate every perplexed question, every animated discussion, every vexed dispute.

In the application of this principle, that is basilar and fundamental, there are three classes of actions, about which, as I have suggested, I will give you frankly some of my ideas. They may be Puritanic. But it was the way I was brought up. I owe them, most of all, to a sainted spirit who was all a mother could be to me, who is now in heaven keeping that Sabbath that knows no end. The first of these three classes of action are those that render at once impossible the end for which the Sabbath was ordained—man's best welfare, man's enlargement and spiritual growth. Against these we are to set our faces like a flint. All secular business that is not needful to sustenance and life on the Sabbath. Crowding business into Sunday by overwork on Saturday, or late hours on Saturday night. Travelling on Sunday to get to

business sooner, except over the ocean, where we can't get to business without. It would hardly do to stop mid seas on Sunday. There are certain kinds of business that are connected with special necessities that are exceptional. So long as cows give milk on Sunday I am inclined to think it is right to dispose of it. I think indolence and laziness have very much to do with Sabbath breaking. I was delighted not long ago when a certain member of my church had the first well day on Sunday. There is so much Sunday sickness, the disease at its height at church time. Doctors are so generally victimized on the first day of the week. Our mistake is fatal as it seems to me when we turn God's holy day into man's holiday, when we devote the day to athletics, or to horse, instead of to the Lord. Sacred concerts are an outrage on our common christianity. Excursion trains are as disorderly, in the sight of God, as the drunken spree in which they generally end. Manhattan Beach and Rockaway are the darkest blot on our American civilization. There Sabbath in Summer is a pandemonium. All the salt of the sea whose surf rolls upon them can't purge the gross iniquity.

A second class of actions involved in this subject are those that can only be settled on the ground of expediency, and so as to minister most effectively and most surely to the welfare and best interest of men. To this alembic of Christian expediency we must bring the question of horse cars on Sunday. No more work is necessitated thereby than to carry so many of

the rich in carriages to church. So, also, a limited number of railroad trains; the opening of telegraph offices and drug stores at certain hours; riding and walking on Sunday. I think dinners ought to be such as will most strengthen us for the duties and enjoyment of the day. If cold dinners do not make us amiable they will not further the ends of the Sabbath. Our reading should be such as ministers most to the best that is within us. If novels do that, I have nothing to say, except that I am filled with wonder and surprise. The morals of letter writing on Sunday depends on the letters.

Then we have the third class of actions that directly contribute to the great object of the day and that become obligatory wholly on that ground. Here we place the ordinances and institutions of religion—the service of the sanctuary, and all its attendant ministry. I am old fashioned enough to believe that the day can not be better spent, than by faithful, habitual attendance upon them all. If the preaching isn't good enough, get rid of the preacher, and have better. But hear the preaching, such as it is. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together."

And as the climax of this subject to-day I desire to assert, with all possible emphasis, impelled by a spirit inherited from our Pilgrim fathers, the right and the prerogative of this American republic, to which I esteem it the highest civil honor of man to belong, to stand immovably and adamantine, as a bulwark and defense of the christian Sabbath among the nations of

the earth. As a christian nation, founded in prayer, cemented by pious blood, we have a supreme right, an imperative obligation, to enforce all wise and salutary Sabbath laws. If German infidels or native-born atheists don't like it they can leave the country, and we will count ourselves happy to endure the separation. I would like to see an immense tide of emigration setting the other way. It would pay to furnish a whole flotilla of ships. I believe the day of visitation is coming to continental Europe for her disregard, and her gross violation, of the Sabbath. The anathemas and the denunciations of holy writ gather like clouds to break with thunderbolt and lightning's flash over their heads. May God preserve this American republic from the pestilence and fatal miasms of a continental Sabbath, that is a continental sham;—a stone where humanity asks bread. Against cholera and yellow fever we establish strictest quarantine. We keep them successfully from our shores. We preserve the nation intact. The anti-Sabbatism of Germany and France is a more destroying contagion—a more blasting epidemic of desolation and death. It has plunged those great peoples into infidelity and godlessness. As this American republic inherits the spirit of other days, as we are true to the faith of our fathers, we will establish strictest quarantine, we will stay the fatal contagion, and say to this mighty, this inrushing, this destroying, tide: "Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."



Jehovah.

THE Jews of old had a somewhat peculiar, and, in many respects, an abnormal, view of God. So far as we may be able to analyze the idea they entertained it was about this: He was a very large man, sitting on a very lofty throne, sending His angels as His messengers to do His bidding, wielding a sceptre of resistless dominion, and unapproachable in His stern majesty and His exalted greatness. When they came to His name in their Bibles, they passed it over in silence with a reverential pause, afraid to offend that strange and mysterious Being by its pronunciation. They ascribed to Him bodily parts like their own, and supposed Him to be busy opening windows in heaven to let it rain, getting the sun up in the morning, and lighting the stars, as so many lamps, at night. They supposed Him to be susceptible of very weak and childish passions, Who made mistakes and was sorry afterward and cried; Who could love a man like Jacob with all his tergiversations, because he was Abraham's grandson; Who intended great things for the people He had chosen, and proposed to compass the destruction of everybody else. These were some of their misconceptions and distortions of the divine nature, and a few of their prevailing ideas of God.

But side by side with these national perversions, these characteristic mistakes, about God, the Jewish mind laid firm hold of one idea that was at the bottom of all their thinking, that distinguished their view of divinity from that of the sister nations around them, and which was inherently, deeply true—which was indeed fundamental to all truth upon this vital and all important theme. That idea, characterizing all their thought, the basis of all their conclusions upon this subject, was of the oneness, the singleness, of Deity. Whatever misconceptions they entertained, whatever the perversions that might characterize their theology, there is no room for doubt that the Jewish race was thoroughly and sincerely monotheistic. They believed, as a nation, and as long as the nation lasted—they believe as a race to-day wherever that race extends—in *one God*. And their idea of the unity of God was based upon the reality, and the absolute necessity, of His nature; upon the inherent demands of His being. Because He was what He was, He must be One.

This pervading and underlying thought, this under-current of all their ideas about God, was clearly and forcibly expressed in the name they ascribed to Deity and that they held in such exalted reverence, that they passed it over in silence when they read the law, regarding its utterance too sacred for human lips. In contrast with the names given by other nationalities to the gods they worshipped, names that denoted no more than their distinctive individuality, as do the

names we give to men, the word the Jew employed was, in its derivation and in its composition, descriptive of absolute and supreme existence. It meant the Only Living One. It is a word that wisest orientalist to-day knows not how to pronounce. And because it was never intended by pious Jew to be pronounced; by the Jew, who employed it, never was. As nearly as we know the strange and mystic word that he held in such reverential awe, it is the four letters y, h, v, h—sometimes pronounced Yahveh, or Yehveh; in our Bibles, Jehovah; but, as a fact, excluding pronunciation as an impossibility. A word that, in the pious thought of the Jew, should go down through the ages, the unutterable, because the unpronounceable, word, —Yhvh. And yet, in that mysterious word, there lay hidden the truth of which I have spoken, that was at the basis of all the Jewish ideas of God, of absolute, supreme existence—existence that in its nature must be single and alone—*the one God*. It was the combination of the past, present and future tenses of the verb “to be”—put, as far as it was possible to do it, in one word; thus combined to the exclusion of all possible pronunciation. Wherever, in the Hebrew scriptures, the word occurs, it means, therefore, the was, the is, the is to be; that Being who alone can say of all the eternity past, “I was;” of the universal present, “I am;” of the eternity in the future, “I shall be;” that Being who, as the Jew expressed it in the word he employed, is “the same yesterday, and to day and forever.”

By that name, by the conception it carries within it, we most truly exalt and honor God. As we think of Him as the absolutely and supremely and solely existing One—who alone in all this universe eternally *was*, everywhere *is*, forever *shall be*. For, in the final analysis, this was not simply a Jewish thought, or a Hebrew conception. It was put supernaturally into the Jewish mind by direct revelation from Him Whose name it is, Whose nature it describes, Whose being it suggests to our thought. So we read: “God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord; and I appeared unto Abraham, and Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name God Almighty, but by my name Yhvh was I not known to them.” Henceforth, by that name, announced to his servant Moses, he shall be known. By that name, in its abbreviated form, yet centering in the same truth, and expressing the same fact of absolute existence, we are enjoined, to “extol Him.” As thus conceived, and as we thus contemplate His exalted nature, the supremely and absolutely existing One is worthy of our praise and He alone! The Being to whom that name can be applied, composed of the three parts of the verb “to be,” that Being who was, is, and shall be, and He alone, is God.

Take His material handiwork, the physical universe, or the orders of the brute creation, and how are they dwarfed into insignificance before the gigantic proportions of that incommunicable word. Of these heavens spread over us as a span, of the rolling spheres and the central suns, of the beautiful lands-

cape and the flowing rivers and the deep blue sea, of all these we must say, looking back into the far off past, they were not; looking into the future when “the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll and the elements shall melt with fervent heat,” when suns shall rise and set, and moons shall wax and wane, no more, we are compelled to say, these *shall not be*. There is only left to these the present tense—*they are*. They were not; they are; they will not be.

When we rise to the sphere of the human, then a second of those three parts is added. God has breathed into man’s nostrils “the breath of life”—an effluence of His own immortality, and, although man a little while ago was not, he now is, and he, in all the future, shall be. We rise from the human to the divine, we come at last to God, when we put the three forms together, and, applying that unpronounceable word of the Jew, think of this Being who reigns above us as He of Whom alone in all this universe it can be said that, in eternity past, he was; in the universal present, he is; in the eternity to come, he shall be, Yhv—*the was, the is, the is to be*.

In our thoughts of God, as we “extol Him” by His own chosen name, we go back in our imagination to the remotest past. We are thinking of a period before man, for the first time, trod the garden: before the mountains were brought forth or ever had been formed the earth and the world; before yonder sun was set in his place or the orbs of night commanded

to shine ; before this vast universe was spoken into being or chaos called into order, or blank space animated with life ; before song of archangel was ever heard in heaven ; before cherubim and seraphim awoke into the consciousness of the effulgent light ; before a created spirit ever soared in divine contemplation or winged it to its flight amid the illimitable spaces ; and, in that universal solitude, in that august and sublime loneliness, amid the uninhabited realms and the silent abysses, there was God. There, in that solitude, forever in the past, where our thought can go no further, or our feeble conceptions aid us in our search. Standing before that reality of the ages untold and unnumbered that lie in that exhaustless depth, we exclaim : “Who, by searching can find out God, or know the Almighty to perfection ?” We can only use the first part of the verb that constitutes His name and say, where our thought is baffled and our conception a blank, only this : “God was.”

We pass on in our thought, and remembering His chosen name, by which we would “extol Him,” we think of the boundless and limitless present. Of the mighty spaces of this vast universe, through which the myriad solar systems, vaster and more extended than our own, are moving with measured tread ; through the empyrean of which the comets, with their trails measured in the thousands of millions, shoot and thwart and dash madly on by quadrillions of miles per hour ; through which the light

darts, with its swift pinion, and yet requires millions upon millions of years to reach from one relatively minute section of this universe to another, as from one township to another on this continent of earth ; and, overwhelmed with the vastness of the present, we know that everywhere, amid all these illimitable spaces, the second part of the verb we are using applies, and "*God is*" We look into these exhaustless depths and we say with the psalmist : " Whither shall I flee from thy presence ? and whither shall I go from thy spirit ? If I ascend into heaven thou art there ; if I make my bed in hell, lo, thou art there ; if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea," nay, soar to the utmost boundaries of unbounded space—"even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me." Everywhere, through all this boundless universe, "*God is.*"

And then, in our thought, we try for a moment to glance into the future. To think of that eternity far ahead, when the earth and all that is therein shall have been burned up ; when all these forms of material existence shall have passed away ; when comets shall shoot athwart the beavens, and rolling suns shall shine, and planets move in their orbits, no more ; when only immortal spirits shall inhabit the mighty spaces ; and we see, amid that glory, One sitting upon the throne, clothed in light, and worshipped of every order of being ; we look upon His face, and it is our, and our father's, God. We add the final part

of the verb—He who “was,” who “is,” is He who forever “*shall be.*”

Our thought, so far as we can compass it, is complete. We have found absolute existence. We have studied the old Jewish nomenclature, and we have discovered the divine—borne to us upon the bosom of that incomminable name. By that name, then, we will “extol Him that rideth upon the heavens,” and we will “rejoice before him.”

The form of the word that is often employed in the present tense—the “I am” adds to the Jewish conception of absolute and eternal existence—being in itself—the “was,” the “is,” the “is to be,” two additional thoughts, by which, if we can, in any measure, attain to their exalted reach, we shall thereby “extol” God. For nothing praises God so truly as true thoughts about Him. The sweetest anthems of praise that rise to the throne are correct conceptions in the minds of those who love and worship and adore.

The first of the two thoughts, then, suggested by this present form of the verb—his name “I am”—is that He who has existed in the eternity past and who will continue to be in the eternity future, lives in an ever present, an eternal, now. That period in the remote past, before the first immortal spirit basked in the sunlight of a new born life; that period in the far off future, when only spirits shall people this vast universe and all that is material and perishable shall have passed away; both are present to the

mind of the Almighty, in whose thought time is eliminated, and the succession of days and months and years are no more. He is the "I am." Existing in an eternal present; all events and beings and things pass before Him in an unchanging now—a thousand years with him as one day, and one day as a thousand years.

The second thought embodied in the present form of this verb of absolute existence, is that God is immediately present, in the exercise of His power, in the control of His wisdom, in the unfolding of His love, in every event that occurs in all this universe, in every purpose that is formed, in every movement that is made, in every deed that is done. Of each alike, from the minutest modification of the molecule to the mightiest impact of the vastest suns, the I Am is the power within and behind it that moves to action, and that controls and sways.

In addition then to the conception of absolute and supreme existence, these are the supplemental thoughts embodied in the name I Am, by which we would "extol" Him, that every event in eternity past, every issue in eternity future, is now present before the mind of the Almighty, and that, in every event, He is the controlling power, the primal efficiency, the great First Cause. In that eternal now in which the I Am dwelleth He is acting through all events and beings and things. All are the vehicles of His power; all are the channels of His action.

And here, in the light of this thought, it seems to

me, there is a gleam cast upon the darkness of the mystery of election and divine sovereignty. There is no such thing as *foreordination* with God. That is man's way of putting it. With God there is no before and no after. In one eternal present He ordains the supreme fruition of every creature of His hand. He does not stand in a far off past, and, looking into the distant future, when man should live upon the earth, say arbitrarily and tyrannically, "Damn that one," "Save that one;" "Cast those into hell," "Take those up into heaven." But, in the eternal present—the unchanging now—in which He dwells, He is prompting every created spirit, from Adam in Eden to the latest child of man, to seek the good, and to share its sure rewards. He is, in present action, ordaining every immortal soul to immortal life. By the influence of His indwelling spirit, through the blood of His only begotten Son, that, in that eternal present, He now sees flowing, the I Am, acting in and through us all, does by His power, save us all—"if." And there comes the terrible alternative, an alternative that would not arise were we not free, did we obey as the morning stars obey, or as the cattle upon the thousand hills, but the alternative that mates our freedom and responsibility, if we do not *prevent* Him by our rebellion, our obduracy and our sin.

I may be able to impress this thought that flows from that wonderful name by analogy. The I Am—immediately present, immediately acting, feeds our bodies. How does He do it? He gives us the organs of

digestion. He puts into us the desire of hunger. He sets before us the food. He gives us the will to act. And that is the end of His power. He can't make us eat. That is the sole impossibility in all this universe to compel the spirit who is free. It is with us, wholly with us, whether, with the desire of hunger within us, possessed of the organs of digestion, having within our reach the food, whether we will eat. And so the I Am, immediately present, immediately acting, in vital intercourse with every immortal soul, proposes to feed the immortal part, elects unto everlasting life every living spirit. He puts within us the power of soul digestion, the capacity to be saved. He implants the longing for immortality, the soul's hunger, the desire to be saved. He sets before us the soul's food, salvation in Jesus Christ. He gives us the power to take it and live. And there lies the boundary to His power. He can't make us eat the heavenly food. He will do all but that. That must remain with us. The final issue is imbedded deep down in our own hearts, where the eternities lie open. God will feed us, if we will eat. He will save us, if we will let him.

Carrying with us, into our daily lives, the thought of such a God, shall we not "work out (our) own salvation with fear and trembling?" Shall we not partake the heavenly food, and share heaven's unfailing bounty, encouraged by this remembrance, that He who is the "I Am," the eternally present and the eternally acting One, "worketh in us to will and to do of His good pleasure?"

Ezek. XVIII: 3. As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.

THE proverb that would be some day out of date was one that in varied forms of expression has been prevalent in every age. It is a species of heterodoxy that has come down from the time of Adam. I suppose his sons and daughters adopted it whenever they got into trouble. Cain, perhaps, when his conscience smote him about Abel. It is the old familiar tendency to throw the load of our guilt and the burden of our iniquity back upon the afflicted shoulders of our fathers, and to ascribe all our dark spots and blemishes to a remote ancestry. In the time of the prophet Ezekiel this form of heterodoxy had been gathered into a proverb that was on every tongue: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." Like all familiar errors, this old saying of Ezekiel's time, this kind of household word, with all its heresy, was based on a minute modicum of truth. It would be difficult, indeed, to find a heresy that is not. Even christian science, the extreme absurdity of our day, that has gone up like a rocket and come down like a stick, has underneath it the truth that nobody ever doubted, or ever called in question, that the mind has a positive

and controlling effect on the body. That many times we are sicker than we otherwise would be, because we think we are. And that often we get well, because we are bound we will. So of any prevalent error, or heresy, however rash or absurd its tenets may be. At their centre there is generally a kernel of truth. The apple may be thoroughly rotten, but there is one good seed at the core. So of this heresy of nearly 2,500 years ago. When they used to complain: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge" they were turning into a falsehood, as palpable as the joke, a world-wide and an irreversible truth. It is the fact of all experience that "the sins of the fathers" are visited "upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." As the invariable record of humanity, the changeless experience of the race, the faults of their fathers, in their inevitable effects, their baneful and blasting results, go down to their children. But the perversion of this truth is in the implication of the proverb that the children suffer the punishment, bear the penalty, of their father's sin. That, in the scourgings of the divine hand, the children are whipped for what the fathers do. The penalty for eating sour grapes is the setting the teeth on edge. That is the physical punishment. According to this old time proverb, the fathers do the eating, and the children do the tooth-aching. That is, the children bear the penalty their fathers ought to bear; are punished for what their fathers do. And that isn't so. It was not so in Ezek-

iel's time. And it is not in any other. The statement is a heresy, and a lie. The fathers, by eating sour grapes, may get the children into a habit of doing the same things, or may transmit to them tendencies to do it, they may get it into the blood, but the children's teeth will never be set on edge unless they eat sour grapes themselves. You see the distinction do you not between the truth of inherited tendencies, transmitted qualities from father to son, and the perversion of this proverb of transferred punishment and actual suffering of the penalty of guilt incurred in other hearts and lives? We say a father eats poison, that that poison, though extracted before it proved fatal, has injured his system, that the injury to his system goes down to his sons in impairment and injury. But that is a very different thing from the statement, analogous to this heretical maxim of the ancients, that a father eats poison and his son dies. He don't die. And he never will unless he takes the poison too. A father may commit murder and be hung or electrified, and hand down to his children a name covered with disgrace and a heritage of dishonor. But that is not by any means to say that a father may commit murder, and, in a moment, his son be hung. A father may drink to excess, and transmit tendencies and appetites to his son that it will take a lifetime to conquer. But it never occurs that a father drinks the liquor and the son does the getting drunk. A father may leap over a precipice, or into a fire, a son may be almost impelled by the force of the ex-

ample, in the excitement of the moment, to follow his father and take the same fatal leap, but it will never be true that the father does the jumping and the son has the broken bones or the scars.

This maxim of twenty-five centuries ago was applied at that time to the condition of Israel in its apostasy and decline. The theory was that because their forefathers, generations before, ate the sour grapes of rebellion and of high handed crime, the "children's teeth were set on edge" in banishment and exile. That the children were bearing the penalty of their fathers' sins. That the punishment was visited on their heads. It wasn't so. It looked so, perhaps, on the surface. For there were the two factors. The abominable courses, the wicked ways, the unrestrained vices, of their fathers. There was no doubt about that. And then there was their present condition. They were in exile and banishment. That was a manifest fact. But the heresy—the error into which they fell—was when they connected these two facts in the relation of cause and effect, and reasoned that the one was the result, the penalty, of the other. As though we should find one sick of yellow fever in Jacksonville, Florida, and another of consumption in Montreal, and should say that the consumption in Montreal was caught from the yellow fever in Jacksonville. Two facts may be facts and not causes or effects. So there was nothing the matter with the facts when this proverb had its origin. They were indisputable. Their

fathers were a disgrace to humanity. And the sons were in a horrible condition. But their philosophy was all wrong. The one was not gallows on which the criminals of other days were hung by proxy. Not the stocks or the pillory where other feet or necks were fastened. Not the setting of teeth on edge for other people's mastication of acrid fruit. If they, the sons, had done right, they wouldn't suffer. All the denunciations God had pronounced upon the descendants of those outrageous fathers were carried into execution because those descendants were just as bad as, and, as a general thing a great deal worse than, their ancestors. Iniquity and crime had accumulated with the years. Their teeth were tested, because they deserved it. That was all. The correct theology on this question, I am inclined to think is about this. The practice of eating sour grapes on the part of the fathers is a very unfortunate and a very dangerous thing. It makes the children unhealthy. It inclines them to eat them. But the children's teeth will never be set on edge if the process stops with the conduct of the fathers. If the children do not eat, in the domain of morals, they will have no use for a dentist. Their teeth will be all right, if they let the grapes alone.

We may apply this principle to bodily and physical influences, transmitted from generation to generation, inherited with the blood. When the fathers eat sour grapes, are guilty of sins against the body, of excess or indulgence, their indiscretions and their excesses injure and harm the children, become an inher-

itance of calamity and disease and death. So the nations and races of the past have gone into decline. The fathers have eaten sour grapes, they have transmitted the habit to their children, the children have adopted the same diet more gluttonously and more ravenously, and the accumulated burden of physical sins, of violation of physical laws, has rested more and more heavily upon them, until, in their enfeeblement and decline, stronger races have usurped their supremacy, those of purer, more wholesome blood have come upon them, and, in the inevitable law of the survival of the fittest, the debilitated and the reduced by physical excesses have gone to the wall, and the nations of nobler parentage and purer ancestry have supplanted them and taken their place. So it was with the empire of Rome, in the days of her sad decline. The excesses of the past, the transmitted tendencies to excess in those later days, these sour grapes of which the fathers ate, and the children still more abundantly, set their teeth on edge, were the ruin and downfall of the empire. Those manlier, athletic nations of the north swept everything before them, and the purer blood that coursed in their veins washed out in oblivion the tainted and the impure inheritance from the excesses and the indulgences of the past. And yet, as a truth of philosophy and of history as well, we mistake and we misinterpret the ways of God, if we do not remember that all this follows not because the fathers, but because the children after them, following their example, falling into wilder excesses, plung-

ing into grosser indulgences, have eaten sour grapes. Therefore, and therefore only, the children's teeth are set on edge. If the children surmount these adverse influences, if the children, in stalwart purpose, in resolute decision, cease these excesses, their teeth will be all right. On their unfavorable inheritance from the habits of their fathers, as stepping stones, they may mount to nobler achievement, and to grander and more heroic endeavor.

So of the sour grapes of false theories in philosophy, and erroneous ideas in religion. If the fathers are all twisted and awry on these things, they transmit a fearful inheritance to their children. And if the children accept the inheritance and, in supine indifference, think as their fathers think, and swallow whole their philosophy—keep eating the sour grapes—their teeth will be set on edge. But if, at any point, the children decline the process, and revolt from the dark inheritance, if they seek earnestly after truth, if they inquire humbly at the gates of wisdom, standing at the portals of her doors, nobody's teeth will be set on edge, the perils of the past will be averted, and they will rise, in triumphant ascension, from the burden of a calamitous ancestry, from the curse of heretical fathers or unorthodox mothers, from the bane of error and falsehood that inhere sometimes so tenaciously in the inmost content of the blood.

And all that has been said applies with especial and peculiar force to our Calvanistic doctrine of original sin. It would have been a blessed thing for you and me if

Adam and Eve had not commenced the process, six thousand years ago, of eating sour grapes, if they had not introduced into our race the habit of doing wrong. It would be immensely to our advantage, if our intervening ancestry, from Adam down, had not continued the process, increased the force of the habit, and so, through the accumulated strength of sixty centuries, inclined us, from the time we know anything, to eat sour grapes, to do wrong. As the habit of the race. As the way we were made. Not by God, but by God, supplemented by all the inherited tendencies, all the accumulated forces of evil and of wrong, since Adam, created erect, learned to grovel and to bend. But if we, in resolute decision, are ready to resist this inheritance of sin, to set back this tide flowing down through the centuries, by the grace of God to get out of this atmosphere that floats as a miasm over humanity, if we will not follow the example of our fathers, if we will not eat sour grapes—positively and wilfully and personally sin, our teeth will not be touched. We shall not be punished for what Adam did. Nor for what our grandfathers or our grandmothers didn't. We shall stand before God in our own individual responsibility, and whether our "teeth" shall be "set on edge" or not will depend wholly on whether or not we eat "sour grapes"—whether we ourselves, in our own free and untrammeled volition, do wrong. "Ye do the deeds of your fathers," said the Master, in His fierce and fiery denunciation, in the tremendous outburst of His wrath. They perished, not because of

their fathers' deeds, but because they did them. Our fathers may have been felons, but that don't hurt us if we are saints.

The prophet applies the philosophical principle to which we have turned our thought still more broadly in human life, and he not only draws a line of demarcation, of separation, between father and son, but between our past and our present selves as well. And it is the application of the same principle, for, in a very vital and a very practical sense, our past self is the father of which our present self is the son. We are to-day the product of what we were yesterday. We shall be to-morrow the outgrowth and the fruitage of what we are to-day. The child is father of the man not only, but our whole past self is the ancestor of ourself this day and hour. And in this sphere of experience, this narrow range of life, our principle applies. Our teeth will not be "set on edge" for the "sour grapes" we used to eat, if we don't eat them now. We shall never be punished for what we were, if we have become better. As Ezekiel expresses it: "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die." No teeth will ache, if no sour grapes are eaten. No penalties impend, if no wrong is doing.

I wish I could impress this all inclusive principle of

morals upon our inmost thought, and get it deep down into our inmost souls. It is reiterated and reinforced with exhaustless emphasis at the cross of Christ. So completely does the Crucified atone for our transgression, so to the uttermost does He save us, so to the last stain does His blood wash away sin, that we stand before God as though we had come from His hand pure and sinless this hour. As though He had just created us, as He created Adam in Eden, without a scar or a taint,—when, looking upon that nature, and seeing all that was in it, He “saw that all was very good.” No matter how persistently our fathers have eaten sour grapes. No matter how wildly we once plunged into their transmitted excesses. If we have stopped altogether and finally, our teeth will be perfectly sound, our souls unstained, our lives complete. The past we have put away forever. Those sour grapes are trodden under foot. Our fathers we are ashamed of. The inheritance of our ancestry we repudiate. We stand before God all alone. He sees us singly. And to each, standing alone in perfected individuality, apart from all the world, He says, “Come,”—“Enter the kingdom.”

The Eye.

Luke XI, 34: When thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light.

WO factors are involved in every act of perception, the things we see and the way we see them, what we hear and how we hear it. The result, therefore, has a twofold dependence. What we see depends not only on the object at which we look, but on how we look at it. What we hear depends not only on the sound that strikes the air, but on how it strikes the tympanum of the individual ear. So of the inward organs of the mind as well. What we perceive with the eye of intellect and thought depends on the object of which we think, and on the way we think about it. Idealism has this basis of truth underneath all its absurdities, that many times things and men are simply what we think they are. Some are the most charming people in the world to us, because we think so. They are not to everybody, which is all the more satisfactory to us.

Hence it is that we see the same things many times and see them very differently; hear the same sounds and have wholly different impressions; think about the same things and have wholly different thoughts; keep in our minds the same persons and entertain wholly different views and wholly opposite

sentiments. Have you ever heard two perfectly honest, reliable persons testify before the court on opposite sides of a legal case? Both saw the same thing. Both tell the truth, as they believe it. And they tell a directly opposite story. They contradict each other from beginning to end. Yet neither is a perjurer. They saw differently. You ask an enthusiastic Democrat to tell you the bottom facts about the present national administration, and then you sit down by a thorough-going Republican and let him give you the same interesting narrative. It will require a microscope of most powerful lens to detect the point of identity. Ask a reformer and an ambitious seeker of office what they think of Civil Service Reform, and the answer will lead along wholly opposite lines and in most divergent directions. The comparative efficiency of Prohibitory and High License laws is a perpetual bone of contention. It divides us into two great armies. Battalions that let the enemy alone and hack and hew each other. We can never get at the facts. Because every investigator looks through Prohibition or High License glasses, and tells us what he sees, not necessarily what is there.

Two are walking side by side through a picture gallery. They look upon the same canvas. They contemplate the same products of artistic skill. They see the same lines of beauty, the same delicate shades, the same blending of color and of hue. And yet what a different story they tell us, what different impressions they have received, as they leave the gallery

of art behind. What has left an indelible impress upon one, has been wholly forgotten by the other. What was matchless skill in the eyes of one was a daub in the eyes of the other. Some pictured scene, of rarest art, that caused a thrill of rapture in the one, made the cold chills run through the other. What the one admired, the other abhorred. They looked at the same things. They looked differently. So when a company of friends have listened to some great singer, and, when the tones of the voice have died away, give to each other their impressions. The one has been charmed by the sweetness of the song, another by the execution of the singer, another by the pathos of her spirit, another by the grace of her movement, another of the number will be pretty sure to speak first of all of the perfect fit of her dress. They all heard and saw the same prima donna, only they heard and saw differently. It would be interesting to listen to the remarks of a congregation, filing out of the church door, after they have heard a particular sermon, except, it may be, to the preacher. A great many, perhaps, would be talking about the bonnets, but some would be talking about the sermon, and what a different thing on different lips that same sermon would be. There cut in pieces by criticism; there served up in a dish for other people; there etherialized into a kind of angelic communication; and there accepted as a plain and positive message from the depths of an earnest soul. Mr. Gough had in his library one of the matchless representations in art of

the Madonna, and the divine Child. An uncouth, illiterate visitor in Mr. Gough's library stopped before it and said: "A sweet pretty baby, ain't it, Mr. Gough?" The Blessed among women was there on that canvas; the divine Child was in her arms; but the beholder could see nothing but bones and pulp. It was said to be a remarkable and yet an invariable fact of the Centennial in Philadelphia, that no two persons, comparing notes after their visit, ever saw the same things. The same things were there. Only they didn't see them.

This fundamental principle of philosophy was constantly before the mind of the Master and His disciples. How often did that wonderful Teacher, when proclaiming to humanity some great truth, some new revelation from the skies, use, in intense solemnity, this word: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." The truth was infallible. But oh there was so much the matter of their ears! He who taught them was unerring, but they needed so imperatively this ever repeated counsel: "Take heed"—take heed—"how ye hear." Casually, perhaps I may say carelessly, speaking we would say that "the light of the body" is the atoms or waves of material light that float in the atmosphere around us. Those that God created sixty centuries ago, or millions and millions of years, according to our geologic theology, when He said, in resistless command: "Let there be light." The Master, basing his utterance on this philosophical principle of which we have been thinking, says: "The

light of the body is the eye." In us, not outside. Here, not all around. The atoms--the waves--the undulations of atmosphere--these amount to nothing, unless we have the healthy organ to see them. If the eye is all right then we see. If that is all wrong, then we don't, though the atoms are indestructible and the waves and undulations ceaseless. All depends on the looking. "When thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light." Good eyes of soul are transparency. Bad eyes opacity. Good eyes, light. Bad eyes, darkness.

The principle applies in the material and physical world. No gay deceiver can equal in deception these eyes of ours. They can pervert, and twist, and deform to any extent. When the infant child first sees, there is no conception of distance. Every object, however remote, is right against the eye. There is no intervening space. We do not know this from memory, but from the experience of the blind who have been restored to sight, and, when they saw, saw everything close to them, and from the fact that an infant child will dodge when an object is nowhere near. It has not learned to calculate distance, and its little eyes tell it a story. When we put a straight stick in water, our eyes tell us that, at the point of contact with the water, it is bent. There is nothing the matter with the stick. Our eyes are false witnesses.

All this of eyes that are well. When they are diseased, or awry, then the philosophical principle is

all the more forcibly impressed. The astigmatic eye sees indistinctly and imperfectly. The horizontal and the perpendicular lines on the chart are of equal breadth and blackness, only the eye, in its impairment, sees a difference. There is not any difference. Only the eye sees it. As our professor in college used to say: "There is no such thing as ghosts, though a great many have seen them." Until middle life one, whom I know, was not aware that there were the minute wavelets of water playing over the surface of the quiet lake that most other people have seen all their lives. The ignorance was a slight defect of vision. The wavelets were there. His eyes did not see them. What a new world opens before the vision of one who has for years neglected the optician, and at last comes to his senses, and obtains glasses that fit him—that virtually open his eyes to see ! Everything is just the same as before. And yet everything is changed, every beauty is enhanced, every object is clarified, a new world opens, because he has begun to see.

The principle before us is of still higher application when we think of the inner eye of the soul, the perceptive faculty within us, that looks out and draws its own conclusions about the world and all that is upon it. The idealist says that that is all the external world there is—what we create by our thinking about it. There are only men and women around us because we think there are. There are only hard substances that we hit and get hurt, because we think we

hit them and think we get hurt. There is a God in this universe only because we think there is. No Deity but the manufacture of our thoughts. Now this is the last absurdity. We know there are men and women around us, for they make themselves known to us in very many ways, sometimes by the extent to which they make us love them, and sometimes by the degree in which they make us hate, or, perhaps I better say, dislike, them. We get hurt for we bear the scars and the broken bones. There is a God for our inmost soul feels Him. And yet this last absurdity of philosophy is based on the truth that underlies our thought to-day, that men and things are very much what we make them; the men and women around us lovable or hateful as we love or hate them; our injuries and wounds great or small as we magnify or minimize them; and God a Being of infinite charm, or a consuming fire, as we think of Him in the inmost trend of our silent, deepest thought. Not as we theorize about Him in our theologies, but as we think, and as we feel, when we are alone with Him in the presence of the eternities. There, in that inaccessible chamber of the soul, God is the sunlight or God is the deep, dark gloom.

Our perceptive faculty, the way we look at things, is determined very largely by these extraneous considerations, these moulding and controlling influences. Our prevailing appetites and passions sway us very largely in our views and opinions. We think many things because we want to think them. And

we refuse to believe others because we don't want to. Our surroundings in life, the character of the parents God has given us, the wife or husband a man or woman has, the dispositions of our children, the tone of the society in which we move, all these enter largely into our philosophies, and give direction to our beliefs, and modify our opinions. Our education from our childhood until now, the ideas our teachers put into our heads long years ago, the college we went to, the papers we read, the stump speakers we hear, the preachers to whom we listen, all these go into the make-up of our minds, and enter largely into what we think and the way we reason. And then our personal, present interests bias and limit us, and narrow the range out of which we cannot easily get because we cannot possibly get out of ourselves. How much these all have to do, for example, with a man's politics. His appetites and passions—his desire for position and place. His surroundings—the class of politicians with whom he trains. His education—the way his fathers used to think, or some master mind into contact with which he has been brought. His present interest, and what it pays to think. Many times these are the ingredients of nine-tenths of a man's politics, leaving one-tenth to conscientiousness and candor.

In our investigation in any department of science, in our study in any department of art, these influences largely enter, and go to the final and determining results. And we reach those conclusions at last that

are in harmony with the demands of our passions, that coalesce most quickly with our surroundings, that antagonize the least our earlier education, and that fall in most swiftly with our interests and what we want to do.

When we come to the domain of morals and religion, you see how vitally the principle bears upon all our thought and action. If the eye of the soul "is single, the whole body is full of light." If we see rightly, all is right. If we see wrongly, all is wrong. And we see just as the eye of the soul—conscience—is fitted to see. In the material world, we see just what the physical eye detects; in the intellectual world just what the perceptive faculty, the mental eye, discovers; in morals just what conscience, the moral eye, tells us is there.

And all these influences, of which I have spoken, are operative to warp or to untie conscience. Sometimes to enslave it. Sometimes to set it free.

The single question is, What are they doing with us? Are the appetites and passions of our natures other messes of pottage for which we, as Esaus, are selling our birthright, in that fatal commerce, where there is "no room for repentance though" men seek it "carefully and with tears!" Are they the accumulated burden under the weight of which we go away from the Master "sorrowful?" Are the surroundings of life a fatal miasm, in the damp and chill of whose marshes, health of soul is the great impossibility? Are all the influences of our early education,

coming up from our past, leading us away from truth and the Master and God ? Are personal interest, present ease, earthly emolument, all pointing the other way ? Then the eye of the soul is "double"—"the whole body is full of darkness."

The only hope of salvation is in clarified vision. The single eye. The divine Spirit must lift the film. The electric forces of grace must absorb the cataract. Passion and appetite will then be brought under control. No mess of pottage will betray. The eye of the watchmaker is trained to discover the minutest defect, to see in a moment the most trivial flaw. When the eye of the soul is single, it sees the first defraction from the straight line of virtue, and avoids it. The pilot out on the ocean hears the far off fog signal that to other ears is noiseless. Our trained spirits distinguish far off the heavenly voices, the signals of safety from the skies. And as the eye of spirit is clear, and waxes strong and far reaching, the range of vision opens. It begins to look through the mystic glass of faith, and discerns the glorious things of God. It takes the telescope of its divine communion, it sees a starry heavens, a vast blue dome, and then, the soul that is looking, in one mighty sweep, enters upon its possession, it grasps with open hand them all—"all things" ours--"we" "Christ's" and "Christ" "God's."

Math X: 32. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

WHO weeks from to-day this community will be challenged anew by the mandatory voice of this church. As one man, we who are identified with it, in the accustomed form, and by the divinely instituted ordinance, will together speak the language of our familiar hymn, lifting together this calling voice:

“We’re marching to Canaan with banner and song,
We’re soldiers enlisted to fight ’gainst the wrong:
But, lest in the conflict our strength should divide,
We ask, Who among us is on the Lord’s side?
Oh, who is there among us, the true and the tried,
Who’ll stand by his colors—who’s on the Lord’s side?”

With this purpose in view as a church, I, as its representative to-day, would speak to you upon the vital subject of confession, upon the duty and the privilege no less of an open, frank, willing acknowledgement of the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal, present Saviour. May the divine Spirit, with resistless power, carry that duty home to many a heart and conscience while I speak.

Christianity, in which, as a system, we all heartily believe, is individualized and made distinct among the varied religions of men by its *personal* element—its

relation fundamentally, not to a truth, nor to a principle, but to a *Person*. At the centre of this system stands a Man. In a famous temple in the east there are four entrances, one to the north, one to the south, one to the east, one to the west. By which ever portal you enter, you pass through a long corridor to one central room, crowned with a vast and ample dome. Christianity has its entrances, its long corridors, its multiplied truths, its eternal principles. All lead alike to the central room beneath the vast and towering dome, the Person, the Lord Jesus Christ. Other religions stop at principles, Christianity stops at Christ. Others present truth, this presents a divine personality. In Him truth centres, duty inheres, life indwells, heaven consists.

With so great and with so reiterated emphasis did the Master enforce this conception of His religion that the only possible conclusion of him who denies His divinity is the bold blasphemy of His exhaustless egotism. He put the "I" and the "Me" before everything else. Because He was God, or because He had such an exalted conception of Himself. One or the other conclusion is inevitable.

And so we have this intense personal element, pervading all His teachings to men. "Come unto"—not a system, not truth, but—"Come unto me, and" not truth, not God, but "I will give you rest." "Follow," not what He may teach, the principles He may inculcate, but "follow me." "Without me ye can do nothing." "I am the light of the world."

“If any man thirst, let him come unto *me* and drink.” “No man cometh unto the Father but by *me*.” No other religion adopts that language. The Vedas of India, the Koran of the Mohammedan, the Shastras of Buddhism, the refined metaphysics of our fashionable philosophy, all these are centred in great principles, they present to the soul great truths. Salvation consists in the acceptance of principles. In the belief in truths. Here, at the cross, we go back of great principles, we step behind eternal truths, and we get at last to the Person who is the living soul of all great principles, the vital force of all essential truths, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This conception of our holy religion leads us at once to the duty of *confession*. If a Mohammedan can be saved by his religion he can be saved without confessing Mohammed; or the Buddhist without confessing Buddha; or the Chinese without confessing Confucius; because each of these was subordinate, and so proclaimed himself, to the truths he taught. But the christian, to be a christian, must confess Christ, because He placed Himself above all truth, superior to principle, sovereign over a system, and a confession of christianity becomes essentially a confession of its Christ. “He that confesseth *me*.”

In the tenth chapter of His epistle to the Romans Paul sets the two duties of the Christian life side by side. He makes them alike essential. Belief and confession. Faith and frank avowal. “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the

mouth confession is made unto salvation." But before the apostle announces this alliance, He makes the duty of confession, in harmony with our thoughts today, intensely, vividly, personal. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus." That is the final condition. Confession. Confession, not of a principle, not of a truth. But, as Paul puts it, of a Person. And so the Master had said, long before Paul had a thought of Him: "Whosoever therefore confesseth me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." A Person must confess us. A principle couldn't do that. Truth could not, in the abstract. A Person must do it, and so the Master proclaims it alike essential that we all confess a Person,—confessing Him—He confessing us.

The question is often asked, what doctrines are necessary to salvation, what must a man believe in order to be saved? To how much must we give assent to get to heaven? It is a question from a very low plane. But it is true to human nature. Of any good thing, we are very apt to ask, How much must we do or suffer to get it? So on the same principle we ask, How much must we believe to get the believer's reward? I am not prepared to answer that question. I was, when I came out of the theological seminary twenty-six years ago, not then of a very advanced or mature age. But I have been thinking during these twenty-six years, and it comes to me now about like this, that we can not outline theologies for men, we can not grind out confessions. It will be better after

all to stop with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ—just where the Master did, when He said, “Whosoever therefore shall confess me.”

The time has gone by when, with any authority or accents of command, we can say to men, Believe as we do, or be anathema—think just this way or be lost. The old habit lingers in the disposition down in our hearts quietly to opine that, if men do not think about as we do, there is very little chance for them. The impression is harmless so long as we do not give it utterance. So long as we do not give it utterance in rack and thumbscrew, as Rome did three hundred years ago; or in denunciation and abuse, as have the bigotry and narrowness of a later day. The essential of all religion is the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. There all truth centres. Thence all life flows. Our confession as christians is made, whatever our theology, when we confess *Him*. The Hottentot and the New Zealander, meeting together, both lovers of a new found Saviour, of a wholly different tongue, could find no method of expression until a familiar word of the language the missionaries spoke came to each, and one shouted enthusiastically “Amen” and the other rapturously responded: “Hallelujah ?” A very few words can bring the world of believers together, of every land, of every family, of every faith, if they are spoken at the cross, if they voice the praises of Him Whom, with one united anthem, over all the earth, we “crown Lord of all.”

And so the duty of confession flows from the

inmost nature of our religion, as it soars beyond doctrine and tenet, and finds its resting place in a divine Personality. Centering in the Person of the living Christ, our allegiance is commanded, and our confession becomes a sacred trust.

And it is a very natural and befitting thing that we should confess Him, if we love Him. That act of Peter makes us shudder still. We are still horrified at its inhumanity, because he was cursing and swearing about the one he loved most of all, that had the first place in his heart. Had it been a casual acquaintance, one whom he had known only by a passing nod, that had been arrested and dragged into the judgment hall, and with whom he had been declared in sympathy, there would have been no crime in Peter save his cowardice and his profanity. There would have been no baseness of treachery, no dark deed of dishonor. But there stood his best Friend, his most intimate Companion, beneath that bosom beat the dearest heart he knew. And that was his crime. It is criminal always not to confess those to whom we are under great obligations. Here the obligation is in the infinite. Or those to whom we are joined by closest ties. Here the tie is indissoluble. Or those who love us. Here love has laid down its life.

When we come to the question of methods, we enter upon a wide and extended range. Every christian must confess. In what way, rests with his conscience. How, his own heart must tell him. The duty is absolute; the method we must decide, in the exercise of

our best judgment, guided by that Spirit, who, the Master has said, will "lead (us) into all truth." I can say, with absolute authority, you must, in some way, confess the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour. You must, if you desire Him to confess you. He has said so. He of the infallible word. But I cannot say with the same absolute authority that you must confess Him in my way, or in the way of the organized, visible church. There is no "must" at this point. But there is, I am confident, an "incomparably better." Better than any method you, in wisest ingenuity, can devise, is the method, down through the years, of the christian church. The method hallowed by example, ratified by all experience, and sealed with the blessing and fadeless benediction of God.

When we spread that table of our Lord two weeks from to-day, we present to the world the time honored method of confession. We do it, in close alliance with the Master's words when He said: "This do in remembrance of me." The church says to the world: In frank confession sit at the gospel feast. If you love the Lord, sit with those who love him at His table. This is the significance, and this is the essence, of church membership. It is simply a confession of the Lord Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour. It is obedience to His conditions when He said: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven."

No little confusion exists upon this subject of church membership. I would like to dispel a few of

the cloud banks. I would like to dissipate part of the mist.

Some have hesitated, some I doubt not who are present and who listen to my voice at this time, under an impression that the act of connection with the visible church is a profession of superior excellence, of riper spiritual growth. It is a total misconception. It is a perversion, sometimes unintentional, sometimes malicious, of the facts of the case. We are in the church not because we have already attained, as Paul the apostle puts it, but because we are very solicitous to attain, and are resolved to employ every possible means in order to attainment. And so it is rather a denial, than a profession, of any superior excellence or spiritual worth. If any man makes that claim, it is he who stands without, and gives no expression to his desire for a better life by employing the means. His position of all others argues a sense of satisfaction, and a spiritual self conceit. The boy who won't go to school claims to know all he wants to. Not the boy who faithfully applies himself to his books. The man who stays away from dinner declares, by the act, that he is not hungry. Not he who runs at the ringing of the bell. He who takes the cars confesses his need of a conveyance. He who walks says he can get along without.

What I have already said earlier in this discourse, goes to that erroneous conception of church membership that identifies it with a subscription to a system of theology, or acceptance of certain doctrines or his-

toric beliefs. The error has doubtless arisen, in all candor, from the customs of human societies, and the organizations of men. These are generally based upon certain articles of a constitution or by-laws, and membership involves subscription to the constitution and laws. The church of Jesus Christ, in this sense, has no constitution or by-laws, except the fundamental law of allegiance and loyalty to the Person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If we love Him we are qualified for membership, if we are ignorant of the a b c's of theology; if we don't love Him we are not, though we have the catechism at our tongues ends, and though we bristle all over with the sharp points of creeds most rigid and confessions most comprehensive and compact. When a poor sufferer came to the Master for help while He was here, there were no questions asked concerning his theology. The church stands to-day in her Master's stead, and throws open her doors and her heart to all that ask for healing, whatever their religious faith. The church makes no conditions essential to membership that her Master has not made essential to salvation.

Then the most serious error of all upon this subject of such vital interest is the expectation that the church will prove a kind of life insurance society, or membership within it a ticket of security to the skies. Many join the church as they take the cars to Albany—they get a ticket at the office, and take a seat in the car, and dismiss the subject from further consideration and the responsibilities from further care. They expect the

engine of good luck to do the rest. They are sitting very comfortably, but they are nearing a tremendous smash up. Viewing the impending collision of infinite forces, the prophet exclaims: "Woe," woe, woe "to them that are at ease in Zion."

Removing from our minds these incorrect impressions, I would set before you to day our approaching sacramental Sabbath in its simplicity, and at the same time its fearful solemnity, as it shall bid you again, as it has so many times before: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Around that table two weeks from to-day will sit those who, by their posture before the world, that hour, "Confess (the Master) before men." To whom He has promised, Them "I will also confess before my Father which is in heaven." They who shall sit together there are they, like all their fellows, of many imperfections, and of many faults. We don't claim anything else. We are there because we need so much help in our weakness, and so much grace in our sin. But, by that act before the world, we confess the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our only Hope. He is our only Salvation. We trust only in that name, than which there is "none other under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

Friends of mine, I would like to take you each by the hand this morning, in all kindness and in all affection, and ask you one question? When that issue shall be joined, where will you be happiest, when you shall stand before God, if you have been found? At that table, or away from it? For Christ or against

Him ? And while I ask the question, a scene of the coming days rises before me. The days, perhaps, not very far on. I am gazing upon a vast and innumerable multitude, among them the loved and the cherished of your own heart, all standing before God, around the great white throne. And they are looking intently, with their whole natures, upon you, as your spirit passes into their presence, and up to the throne around which they gather. They are waiting there, their hearts going out, oh how fondly, for you, waiting for one thing. They are looking, ah how eagerly, to see what the Master will do. And now I behold that Master step down from the throne on which He sits by the side of the Father. If you have confessed Him here, I see Him take you by the hand, I see Him beckon to those loved ones of the days gone by, to that mother who taught you to pray, to that pastor who led you to Jesus, to that Sunday school teacher who told you so sweetly the story, to all who bore you on the wings of prayer, I hear Him call them to come nearer and see ; and then, as I look, He leads you up to the Father, He puts His hand of endless benediction upon your head, and He says in sweetest tones ear ever heard, "This is my disciple—He confessed me before men, I fulfill my promise, I confess (Him) before my Father and the holy angels. I put the new name upon his forehead. I make him a pillar in the temple of my God. And he shall go no more out forever."

And then I behold another scene. It is dark and

dreadful. For a moment it makes those loving hearts in heaven weep. But only for a moment, for they understand the ways of God to men, and they bow, and are at peace. But the rest of that picture I will not limn. My heart fails me. My pencil drops from my hand. I turn away. And while it lingers like some fearful dream I ask you, Will you come? Will you come?



Separation.

Math. XIII: 30. Let both grow together until—

“*U*NTIL.” Then they shall grow together no more. Then there shall be separation, final, forever. Wheat and tares will remain apart thereafter through the eternities.

There is a tremendous sifting process going on in this world of ours, going on all the while, going on everywhere. You may trace it, if you please, from the lowest up to the highest orders of being and of life. Everywhere separation. He “whose fan is in His hand” is “thoroughly purging His floor.” “The axe is laid to the root of the tree.” Begin at the bottom. Take the lowest stratum of material existence. In mechanics and in the arts there is constant and inevitable separation. Nothing can be done without it. We cannot use the iron, unless we separate it from the slag. We cannot turn our coin into gold, unless we burn away the dross. We cannot erect our buildings of granite and stone, unless we chisel the seams. Ascend one step, and we meet the same necessity. Our farmers cannot bring their produce into market unless they have a thresher and a fanning mill. They have got to get rid of the chaff and the husks, before they can fill our granaries and enrich our produce exchange. Taking another step, the whole study and care upon

our stock farms is to secure everywhere the survival of the fittest. To separate the finer from the inferior grades. Poor from good blood. The superior are lolling in the meadows, the inferior are sent to the slaughter house. Or, if of that class that cannot be eaten, the less promising are harnessed to horse cars, and the more are appareled in nickle and gilt. I refer to city horse cars. We drive very respectable horses before them up here. It is the sifting process that is going on everywhere in this world of ours, constantly, inevitably as it seems, inherent in the very nature of things.

Is there any exception to this law, when we come to man? Is not this race to which we belong being *sifted*, in every department of life, in every domain of action? The strong and the vigorous and the manly prevail. The weaker go to the wall. It is true of races. It is true of men. In the competition of business, here and there one becomes a millionaire, ten thousand by his side become paupers. In politics, one learns the trick of successful manipulation, comes to comprehend the mystery of pulling wires, sits in the legislature, occupies some chair of state; others incomparably more worthy are remanded to the shades of private life. In the professions, one in a decade shines as a pole star: the rest hold candles. Is not the sifting sure? Is it not pervasive? Is it not inevitable as well? Is it not a law imbedded in the inmost nature of things? This world isn't arranged by hap hazard. It isn't a huge box of letters thrown

into a pile. The letters are spelled. It isn't a mass of unhewn stones cast up into a heap; it is a building fitly framed together. "Order is heaven's first law." And the law of the mother country up yonder stands first in the statute book of this earthly colony.

And so when you come to the sphere of morals, to the domain of religion, you are prepared to pause a moment and take in the force of that little word of five letters—"until." Here as everywhere the sifting process must go onward. Here as everywhere separation must come. It is in the nature of things. It is inevitable in the order of this universe. There is nothing about it that is arbitrary or wilful on the part of any being beyond or above us. No blind fatality is pursuing us. No "Mara," as the Indiaman dreams, is hotly after us. No chance is playing with us. Nothing is going to *happen*. The eternities are in our hands. A man's future is his own creation. He makes the only heaven or hell he ever goes to.

Consider that parable of the tares a moment. In that metaphor God is the owner of the field. The owner of that field did not, by some determined, resolute act, make a part of the growth of that field wheat and a part tares. Neither did He put a part of the growth of the field into his barns, and a part into the fire, indiscriminately. He put a part into his barn and a part into the fire because a part in its own nature, and by its own inherent processes of growth, was wheat, and a part, by the same inherent processes, was tares. And in the discussion that is coming on

in our beloved church, that is going to be settled in christian harmony and love, it is going to be understood that Presbyterianism does not teach, and, however stern its statements, never did teach, that God makes a certain part of the race wheat and a certain part tares, and then at last stores up the one and burns up the other.

Neither will there be any separation when the great "until" has come, save that which has been made voluntarily ere that final moment is at hand. The sifting is taking place now. The fanning mill is working. We are taking our places to-day for the final roll call. When the "until" has come it will simply be manifest to all worlds what we were here—wheat or tares. The one will be burned. The other will be gathered into barns. The one burned, because that is the nature of tares. The other in the granaries of God, because that is where wheat belongs.

Or, take that other judgment scene, as our Saviour depicts it so thrillingly in the 25th of Math. He uses the language there: "He shall separate them." "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations. And He shall *separate* them as the shepherd divides the sheep from the goats." How does the shepherd do that? Simply by getting the sheep on one side because they are sheep, and the goats on the other because they are goats. There is nothing arbitrary. Nothing wilful. It is not because

the shepherd feels at one time like putting some animals on one side, and then at another feels like putting some on the other. I don't think we can get this truth too positively or too deeply into our conception of the ways of God. I believe it is fundamental and all inclusive. God made no separation in eternity past. He did not decree so many sheep and so many goats, and make them sheep and goats. He does not separate them in the end, save as they separate themselves by being, of their own accord, sheep or goats.

Or to lay aside the figure that contains a little embarrassment in the physical difference of genus, God did not separate humanity years ago by decreeing that so many should be good and so many should be bad, making them good or bad. God will not separate humanity at last, setting so many on His right hand and so many on His left, because he wants so many on that side and so many on the other. He will do that ultimately, because so many have, in the sifting processes of time, here where the separation is going on every day, taken the upward path, and so many have followed the down grade. As the posture of their souls, as the attitude of their lives, have chosen good or loved evil. *Are sheep after the heavenly pattern, or goats after the satanic design.*

In society, for its protection and defense, we build houses of refuge, reformatories, penitentiaries, State prisons. We don't build them simply that we may put a certain number of our fellow men within their walls, for the sake of having them inhabited. We

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And what an absolute separation that is! One that is in the inmost nature of things, in the very warp and woof of our natures. Separated from each other by what we are. What a separation that is already in the present time. We try to get over those distances between each other, and get close to each other, we who are separated far by nature, but it is the great impossibility. We can't do it. We may live in the same houses, work in the same stores, sit in the same churches, and we are wide apart as the poles. Between a man whose instincts are pure and true and noble, and his next door neighbor whose propensities are all perverse there is an unfathomable abyss. No plummet can sound its depths. Between sweet womanhood and her sister on the streets there is a "*great gulf fixed.*" A gulf no loving heart can cross. Wealth and luxury may take indigence and want by the hand, the reformer and the philanthropist may lay hold of the palm that is black with crime, yes that is red with blood, but in that close contact of person, those natures are millions and millions of miles away. When the sympathizing, loving lips of purity give the kiss to the brow wrinkled with pollution, stamped with defilement, that kiss that brings the lips so close cannot bring those natures one step nearer to each other in the inevitability of their separation.

The heart of the Master went out proudly and warmly to that wanderer from the streets, as her tears fell so fast upon His holy feet. His sympathy drew Him very close. But between that Master and that woman there was an infinite remove, until she repented. Tears brought them together. Tears are, after all, the mightiest enginery in this universe. They bring natures together. They unite souls and God.

If this separation that exists in the inmost nature of things were made by some outward influence, that influence might be changed and the act undone—this separation cease. If God had made it by some decree of the past, God might reverse it sometime in the coming days. If God made it by a moment's decision in judgment, some where, sometime, He might relent, and for good behaviour commute the sentence and set us free. But, no. It is in the nature of things. In the texture of soul. In the substance of being. Interwoven in our thoughts; inwrought in our lives; intertwined in all our future. Revealed in the solemn “until.”

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dreadful. For a moment it makes those loving hearts in heaven weep. But only for a moment, for they understand the ways of God to men, and they bow, and are at peace. But the rest of that picture I will not limn. My heart fails me. My pencil drops from my hand. I turn away. And while it lingers like some fearful dream I ask you, Will you come? Will you come?



Separation.

Math. XIII: 30. Let both grow together until—

“**U**NTIL.” Then they shall grow together no more. Then there shall be separation, final, forever. Wheat and tares will remain apart thereafter through the eternities.

There is a tremendous sifting process going on in this world of ours, going on all the while, going on everywhere. You may trace it, if you please, from the lowest up to the highest orders of being and of life. Everywhere separation. He “whose fan is in His hand” is “thoroughly purging His floor.” “The axe is laid to the root of the tree.” Begin at the bottom. Take the lowest stratum of material existence. In mechanics and in the arts there is constant and inevitable separation. Nothing can be done without it. We cannot use the iron, unless we separate it from the slag. We cannot turn our coin into gold, unless we burn away the dross. We cannot erect our buildings of granite and stone, unless we chisel the seams. Ascend one step, and we meet the same necessity. Our farmers cannot bring their produce into market unless they have a thresher and a fanning mill. They have got to get rid of the chaff and the husks, before they can fill our granaries and enrich our produce exchange. Taking another step, the whole study and care upon

our stock farms is to secure everywhere the survival of the fittest. To separate the finer from the inferior grades. Poor from good blood. The superior are lolling in the meadows, the inferior are sent to the slaughter house. Or, if of that class that cannot be eaten, the less promising are harnessed to horse cars, and the more are appareled in nickle and gilt. I refer to city horse cars. We drive very respectable horses before them up here. It is the sifting process that is going on everywhere in this world of ours, constantly, inevitably as it seems, inherent in the very nature of things.

Is there any exception to this law, when we come to man? Is not this race to which we belong being *sifted*, in every department of life, in every domain of action? The strong and the vigorous and the manly prevail. The weaker go to the wall. It is true of races. It is true of men. In the competition of business, here and there one becomes a millionaire, ten thousand by his side become paupers. In politics, one learns the trick of successful manipulation, comes to comprehend the mystery of pulling wires, sits in the legislature, occupies some chair of state; others incomparably more worthy are remanded to the shades of private life. In the professions, one in a decade shines as a pole star: the rest hold candles. Is not the sifting sure? Is it not pervasive? Is it not inevitable as well? Is it not a law imbedded in the inmost nature of things? This world isn't arranged by hap hazard. It isn't a huge box of letters thrown

into a pile. The letters are spelled. It isn't a mass of unhewn stones cast up into a heap; it is a building fitly framed together. "Order is heaven's first law." And the law of the mother country up yonder stands first in the statute book of this earthly colony.

And so when you come to the sphere of morals, to the domain of religion, you are prepared to pause a moment and take in the force of that little word of five letters—"until." Here as everywhere the sifting process must go onward. Here as everywhere separation must come. It is in the nature of things. It is inevitable in the order of this universe. There is nothing about it that is arbitrary or wilful on the part of any being beyond or above us. No blind fatality is pursuing us. No "Mara," as the Indiaman dreams, is hotly after us. No chance is playing with us. Nothing is going to *happen*. The eternities are in our hands. A man's future is his own creation. He makes the only heaven or hell he ever goes to.

Consider that parable of the tares a moment. In that metaphor God is the owner of the field. The owner of that field did not, by some determined, resolute act, make a part of the growth of that field wheat and a part tares. Neither did He put a part of the growth of the field into his barns, and a part into the fire, indiscriminately. He put a part into his barn and a part into the fire because a part in its own nature, and by its own inherent processes of growth, was wheat, and a part, by the same inherent processes, was tares. And in the discussion that is coming on

in our beloved church, that is going to be settled in christian harmony and love, it is going to be understood that Presbyterianism does not teach, and, however stern its statements, never did teach, that God makes a certain part of the race wheat and a certain part tares, and then at last stores up the one and burns up the other.

Neither will there be any separation when the great "until" has come, save that which has been made voluntarily ere that final moment is at hand. The sifting is taking place now. The fanning mill is working. We are taking our places to-day for the final roll call. When the "until" has come it will simply be manifest to all worlds what we were here—wheat or tares. The one will be burned. The other will be gathered into barns. The one burned, because that is the nature of tares. The other in the granaries of God, because that is where wheat belongs.

Or, take that other judgment scene, as our Saviour depicts it so thrillingly in the 25th of Math. He uses the language there: "He shall separate them." "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations. And He shall *separate* them as the shepherd divides the sheep from the goats." How does the shepherd do that? Simply by getting the sheep on one side because they are sheep, and the goats on the other because they are goats. There is nothing arbitrary. Nothing wilful. It is not because

the shepherd feels at one time like putting some animals on one side, and then at another feels like putting some on the other. I don't think we can get this truth too positively or too deeply into our conception of the ways of God. I believe it is fundamental and all inclusive. God made no separation in eternity past. He did not decree so many sheep and so many goats, and make them sheep and goats. He does not separate them in the end, save as they separate themselves by being, of their own accord, sheep or goats.

Or to lay aside the figure that contains a little embarrassment in the physical difference of genus, God did not separate humanity years ago by decreeing that so many should be good and so many should be bad, making them good or bad. God will not separate humanity at last, setting so many on His right hand and so many on His left, because he wants so many on that side and so many on the other. He will do that ultimately, because so many have, in the sifting processes of time, here where the separation is going on every day, taken the upward path, and so many have followed the down grade. As the posture of their souls, as the attitude of their lives, have chosen good or loved evil. *Are sheep after the heavenly pattern, or goats after the satanic design.*

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that chamber of death? But to all these there comes alleviation. In the sorrow there is assuagement. In the darkness, light. These separations are not in the nature of things. They are not inwrought in life and being. And so they may easily be erased, and these separations cease. Those friends may return from their estrangement, for misunderstandings can be corrected, and the natures are allied. The son and the daughter may come back and the desolated hearth be relighted. Our loved ones taken from us by the last sad visitor may be given back to us in the glad reunions of the skies. At these bed sides we part, but oh, to meet again! These separations are only on the surface. Only on the edges. As fleeting as time. Like the swift post. Not for long. Not for long. But that separation which is working out in character, that is inhering more and more in the inmost nature of things, that is separating men and women for the eternities, to the sadness of that thought I can see no alleviation, to that cloud I can discern no silver lining. When a mother and her child are thus separated, separated by nature, they can never get together again. Friends thus severed may never reunite. There is no cohesive power in this universe that can bring natures together that, in their inmost essence, are apart. No centripetal power that can draw to itself that which in its own inherent centrifugence will fly away, and go off into the infinite spaces.

When God says to a soul: "Come," He simply opens the way for that soul to take its own course

and, in its allegiance and its loyalty and its love, it goes up at once to God. When God says to a soul "Depart," He does the same thing. He lets that soul take its own course, follow its own choice. And, by the irresistible propulsion of its own nature, it goes into the darkness and into the night. Anything to get away from God.

I may speak to you some time about the process of this separation that is now working out in human life for all the future. Let us remember to-day the fact. If separation comes at last, we make it. Not fate. Not God. Not bad luck. We, with the hearts that beat in these bosoms, with the immortal spirits that somewhere in these bodies inhere. In the final analysis we shall be all self made men and women. The process of construction is our own, under God. We are our own architects. We build mansions, or dig great gulfs. We acquire the tastes and the habits of the citizens of the New Jerusalem, or we get into the ways of the inhabitants of the pit. We step into the companionship of the pure and the good and the true, or we court the society of the vicious, the abandoned, the depraved, of all ages and times. God has never done a thing to prevent us from our own untramed choice. He has never put a pebble in our way to hinder, and has done everything possible to help. And when the great "until" has come He will simply lift the veil, uncover the secresy of hearts, and show to the world what we were and where we pleased to go. Every day we live tells on the eternities. Each

thought we think moulds our hereafters. Each deed
is deathless. We hold in our hands two worlds.
Which, which, which shall we let go ?





NOV 1
1898
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BY
CHARLES D. KELLOGG.

January, 1899.

VOL. II.

No. 1.

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The Power of Kindness.



THE subject to-day is a brief poem, recently brought, by a friend, to my attention, the stanzas of which I will read.

We trust in man to save him;
 Make him think he is a man;
Then the good that is within him;
 Strives to do the best it can.

Call him rascal, and we drive him
 From all goodness by the ban;
And the bad that is within him
 Strives to do the worst it can.

Distrust never yet has gathered
 One poor soul to God and life;
But has often further forced him
 On to hatred and to strife.

As man thinketh, so he can be;
 Make him think he can be great,
And the best that is within him
 Strives to reach the wished-for state.

The author of these lines I do not know. You will agree with me that he adds to the capacity of rhyme not a little of the knowledge of human nature. Dr. Fennel, so long the beloved pastor at Glens Falls, delivering a charge to a people, at the installation of

a pastor, impressed most forcibly upon their minds the ease with which they could talk their minister up, or, as surely, talk him down. The poem I have read suggests the same thought, as of universal application. It is as true of everybody as it is of pastors, that we can talk them either way—talk them up or talk them down. The talk of people is the atmosphere in which, as social beings, we are compelled to live. It makes all the difference in the world whether the air is bracing and healthful, full of generous sentiments and kind words; or whether it is malarial and feverous with bitter innuendo, and harsh criticism, rising from the murky marshes of gossip and of slander. Breathing the pure air of kindness, men and women are strong and courageous for the best that is in them. Inhaling the fetid air of the marshes, they are driven many times, as by a deadly disease, to base and wicked courses, to all that is vilest and worst.

Permit me to premise that, in what I shall have to say about charity, and kindly thoughts, and, gentlest consideration, in this present discourse, I intend no extenuation of sin, and no palliation of what is wrong, and, because wrong, utterly hateful and detestable. The exceeding sinfulness of sin lies at the basis of all morals. We have no right to teach ethics without this as a starting point. Sin is that which God hates, and we too, if we are in any kind of alliance with Him. The interesting feature in the late political campaign was its claim to a high moral character. The one side were asking the suf-

frages of the people because the crimes on the canals had been so gross, and the other because crime was embodied so offensively in Croker. Both sides were appealing to the instinctive consciousness, deep down in our natures, that evil doing is a hateful thing, and wherever we find it, in whatever political party or clique, ought to be voted against. Any amount of charity for the sinner, but no patience with the sin. This it seems to me, is essential ethics.

The great distinction, as I conceive it, between Judaism and Christianity was in the clearness and positiveness with which this separation was made by Christianity, while it was often overlooked and forgotten by Judaism. Judaism, many times, in order to get at the sin, slew the sinner. This seemed to be the only way in the earlier centuries; and man seemed so identified with his wrong doing that the only way to get at his iniquity was to extinguish him. The only way that the prevailing abominations that were polluting this fair earth, so fresh from the hand of God, could be abolished, was by abolishing the race that produced them, and so, all, but eight, were drowned. If there had been ten righteous men within them, that would have saved Sodom and Gomorrah. As there were not, the only way to dispense with Sodom and Gomorrah was to burn up the people who made them what they were. Nadab's and Abihu's sin can be reached only by the extinguishment of Nadab and Abihu. Korah, Dathan and Abiram's rebellion is punished only when the earth opens and swallows the rebels. The

instinct thirty-five years ago that so many times said "Hang Jeff Davis" was on this principle. The rebellion was to be punished in the person of the rebel.

The wars with the Canaanites—the cruelties and the seeming crimes against humanity on the part of the heaven-appointed conquerors—what is the explanation? Why simply this. That in that age of the world, and at that period in the evolution of humanity, it was impossible to separate the sinner from his sin, and the only way to make men better was to kill off a large portion of them, and begin again. As civilization advances, and man begins to get a little way from his sin, begins to have an individuality apart from his sin, so that the sin and the sinner begin to be two distinct and separate entities, a new principle is introduced, and, what was forgotten so many times by the Judaism of our Saviour's time, characterizes the Old Testament ethics. A distinction, sharply accentuated, clearly cut, is now drawn between the sinner and his sin. The morals of the Old Testament are thus immeasurably exalted above the custodians of the Old Testament who, in our Saviour's day, prided themselves on their orthodoxy. They sat in Moses' seat and had not an iota of Moses' spirit. In the LVth of Isaiah, we have the clear cut distinction as the announcement of Old Testament ethics. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." Here the sin and the sinner are as distinctly

apart as the poles. They are two wholly separate entities. The one is to be abandoned and cast out. The other is to be regenerated and saved. The sin is to be annihilated. The sinner is to be uplifted to God. See in Ezek. xviii. The entire chapter is devoted to the confirmation of the central truth of all ethics, that a man's moral relation consists in his present attitude toward sin. It does not go to the vital issue that a man's ancestors were virtuous or vicious. "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father." Neither does a man's past determine his present. What he was has nothing to do, in the ultimate decision, with what he is. "If the wicked will turn from all his sins which he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live." "The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." And the reason so clearly announced by the prophet is that when a man turns away from sin he is separated from it just as a brand, plucked out, is saved from the burning. The sinner is as distinct from the sin as the brand from the fire from which it has been plucked. "Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die." This essential ethics of their own Scriptures scribe and pharisee of our Saviour's day had forgotten, and so they were

confounding, in their treatment of the offender, the sinner and his sin. Their way of visiting with vengeance the one was by blotting out the other. Their way of abolishing moral disease was by killing the morally sick. A man wouldn't be sick any more, if they stoned him hard enough. The New Teacher, before whom they stood in amaze, He who "taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes," simply went back to the principles of their own prophets, and resurrected the forgotten basis of all true morals, that the sinner and his sin are two very different entities and that, in the highest ethics, the one is ultimately to be saved by his separation from the other, and by the extinction of sin out of his range of thought and atmosphere of life. In this restitution of the lost chord, in the harmony of essential ethics, it was intensely true, as he said: "I am not come to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil."

Do you know that with the tenderest, gentlest heart in His bosom that ever beat, the most loving nature within Him that ever went out to man, no moralist of the ages ever entertained such a glaring indignation, such a consuming hatred, of sin? He saw it the quickest. He denounced it the most unqualifiedly. And he punished it with the besom of His swift destruction. That "generation of vipers" whom He saw through with eagle glance, shrank away from His presence feeling the mighty weight of His scathing lash. This was the attitude of the Master toward sin. But the moment he traced an

emotion in a human soul, a first uprising of desire, an earliest breathing of aspiration, away from sin, then the two were at once distinguished; the difference between the Nazarene and the Jewish scribe was clearly accentuated; and whom the scribe would destroy in order to get at his sin, the Moralist from Galilee would save to get him away from his sin. He was, as the scribes and pharisees charged so angrily, He was indeed "the friend of publicans and sinners." He was their "Friend" just as scribe and pharisee were their enemies. The moment publican or sinner stood arrayed, by an emotion of penitence, against sin, that moment the Master blessed him, while scribe and pharisee cursed. At that point this new Moralist would save them from their sin. Right there scribe and pharisee would annihilate them with their sin. And so the issue was joined. To scribe and pharisee Jesus was a participant in men's sins. In the mind of Jesus scribe and pharisee were hypocrites and dissemblers, "shutting up the kingdom of heaven," "neither entering in (themselves) nor suffering them that would enter to go in." From a scribe's and pharisee's standpoint, declarations such as these were unintelligible. They were an unknown tongue. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." "I am come not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." "The son of man is come to seek and to save them that are lost." "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety-nine just persons that need no repentance." Such language was revolu-

tionary. The Nazarene was an Iconoclast. This axe that was laid at the root of the tree, was cutting up everything. This fan, with which He could thoroughly purge His floor, would blow away the whole building. And so they stood, Master and Jewish scribe, during those three years, at swords' points. So they were, in their natures, always in hostile array. That woman, caught in the very act, scribe and pharisee would stone. To that woman Jesus would say: "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more." He could say the word because He saw down into her soul and knew that she would obey the command, "sin no more." Those pretended successors of Moses would have left that Samaritan woman at the well, and Zacheus up in the tree. The Christ would seize the opportunity to save a city full of Samaritans. He would call down the other with the glad assurance that "this day is salvation come to this house." It was a difference, you see, of nature. It was a contrast of constitutional temperament. The one, vilest of sinners, cared not for sinners; the Other, sinless, saved them. He looked for the good that was in men. Aristotle was, on one occasion, rebuked for giving alms to an unworthy person. He replied: "I gave: but it was to mankind."

Among the legends of our Lord there is one that He saw in the market place at eventide a large crowd of people looking intently at some object, and conversing excitedly over it. Drawing nearer, He saw that it was a dead dog, with a halter about his

neck, with which he seemed to have been dragged through the streets. A viler object could hardly meet the eye. The people were giving utterance to their unrestrained disgust. One said, "Ah, it pollutes the air." Another, "How long shall this foul beast offend our sight?" "Look at his torn hide" said a third, "one could not even cut a shoe out of it." "And his ears," said a fourth, "all draggled and torn." "No doubt," said a fifth, a genuine Pharisee, "he has been hanged for thieving." A Pharisee would discover immorality even in a dog. Jesus listened, looked upon the abused, maltreated brute, and said, "Pearls are not equal to the whiteness of his teeth."

In this atmosphere of the Master's spirit, we revert to our poem once more.

"We trust in man to save him;
 Make him think he is a man;
Then the good that is within him;
 Strives to do the best it can."

"Love *believeth* all things." "Love *thinketh* no evil." "Love *rejoiceth* not in iniquity, but *rejoiceth* in the truth." If we go to our fellow man, in great temptation, overwhelmed perhaps and overcome; if we go to him in this spirit, having faith in him, the spirit within us will be an *inspiration* to him, it will draw out always the best that is within him. Our teachers will recognize this as an essential principle of discipline in the school room. There must be faith that there is something good in a scholar, or he is a lost case. In our prisons and penitentiaries, this is

the basis of all measures of reform, that, in our criminal classes, there is some element of good, and that faith can build upon it, and, by its dynamic force, make them better men. In society today there are multitudes around us, touching our lives on every side, who are no longer scholars in the school room, for they are men and women now; who never have been in jail; but in whom, if we have a degree of confidence, if we preserve our faith, we implant the noblest impulses of which they are capable, whom we inspire to the best that is in them, whom we may lead with a gentle, loving hand out of prison houses of discouragement, out of penitentiaries of hopelessness and despair, into liberty and into light. If, in our reformatory institutions, it is the spirit of the age to conduct this ameliorating work for the vicious and the criminal classes, then I say it will be a good thing, outside of reformatory institutions, to have a little consideration for comparatively respectable men and women, who are tempted and, it may be, led astray in life. Underneath the evil there is good. Let us find it, and, by sympathy and kindly thoughts, let us call it forth.

A rough looking man brought his boy to school, and left him with the request that the teachers should see if they could do anything for him, because of all the bad boys his father believed him to be the worst. One day, as the teacher was passing by, he laid his hand gently on the boy's shoulder, when the boy shuddered and winced. "What is the matter?" said the teacher. "I thought you was going to strike me,"

said the boy. "Why should I strike you?" "Because I am a bad boy." "Who says you are a bad boy?" "Father says I am a bad boy, and mother says so, and every body says so." "But you are not a bad boy. I do not think you are," and the teacher passed on. The boy became, from that hour, one of the best and most orderly in the school. It is the difference between saying to boy or man, to girl or woman, "you are bad" and saying "you are good."

The Quaker, Isaac T. Hopper, encountered a profane colored man named Cain, and took him before a magistrate, who fined him for blasphemy. Twenty years after the Quaker met Cain, who had gone from bad to worse. Moved with a feeling of warmest sympathy, he took Cain by the hand, and said: "Dost thou remember me, how I had thee fined for swearing?" "Yes indeed I do; I remember what I paid as well as yesterday." "Well, did it do thee any good?" "No, never a bit: it made me mad to have my money taken from me." The Quaker had him reckon up the interest on the fine for twenty years, and paid him principal and interest, with the friendly words: "I meant it for thy good, Cain, and I am sorry I did thee any harm." Cain's countenance changed. The tears ran down his cheeks. He never swore any more. The old Quaker was twenty years behind with his Christianity, that was all.

A returned colored soldier was walking along the streets in Denver. Some boys passing that way taunted him as "that nigger." "I don't think," said

he, "that I ought to be called a nigger any more, when I have fought for my country."

"Call him rascal, and we drive him
From all goodness by the ban;
And the bad that is within him
Strives to do the worst it can."

A tramp who has been on the road a good many years writes an article for "The Forum" on "Tramps." He expresses this sentiment: "If a young man, who gets into a bad way, loses his job, and goes forth despairing into the streets to beg, though the humiliation burns him to the soul, be taken by every sensible person for an idle, lazy vagabond and quasi criminal, he will speedily become one. It is easy at best to roll down hill; and when every (one) kicks you it requires a lion's heart and a hero's faith to keep from going to the dogs at a tremendous rate. * * You may give a man a dime and a kick, and damn him to deeper degradation. But give him a word of cheer, give him a chance—in the name of God, a chance—and you begin to save him."

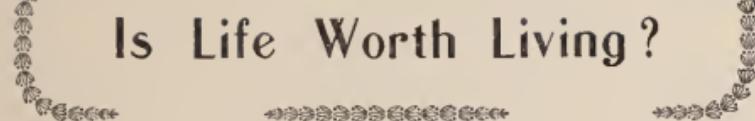
"Distrust never yet has gathered
One poor soul to God and life;
But has often further forced him
On to hatred and to strife."

Moving, as we are, in our quiet and what we consider at least respectable range of society, do we ever give a thought to that most needful class, who most need, not money or coin alone, but sympathy and a heart, our released convicts from our penitentiaries and state prisons? Some one has said, with

only too much truth, that we bar all doors against them except the saloon and the gambling hell and the low dive. Stores are fastened against them. Homes are tightly shut. Churches close their pews." "I was *in* prison," says the Master, "and ye visited me not." What must He say when he is represented in the person of a penitent soul who has come out of prison, and against whom, with a cold, hard heart, society slams the door? An organ of many stops and pipes and diapasons, when the skillful fingers played upon the key board, gave no sound. There was an obstruction in the supply pipe of the motor. The mighty organ was voiceless. Natures around us, capable of sweetest music, full of life's softest harmonies, are silent because our unkindness and harshness and severity, as a fatal obstruction, cut off the supply, and the organ is forever still.

"As man thinketh, so he can be;
· Make him think he can be great,
And the best that is within him
Strives to reach the wished-for state."

I believe that kindly compliments and words of praise, when they are honest, possess within them a saving grace. It is our duty, in all affection, to utter them. They are the incentives many times to noblest action, to sublimest endeavor. Our words may be the mystic ozone, that some manly nature may imbreathe, and, in the stalwart strength of its inspiration, mount to noblest heights, and tread the loftiest planes. We make men best as we speak most often of the best that is in them. When we make men think so, then we make them so.



Is Life Worth Living?

YEA, BETTER IS HE THAN BOTH THEY, ("THE DEAD" OR "THE LIVING") WHICH HATH NOT YET BEEN, WHO HATH NOT SEEN THE EVIL WORK THAT IS DONE UNDER THE SUN.—*Eccl. IV, 3.*

THIS is pessimism, carried to the last extreme. It is a look out into the universe that sees everything *black*. All is midnight in this world of ours. The dead are better off than the living, for they have got through with the curse of having to live. Far better is it never to have been born—for then the calamity of living does not befall.

It follows from this philosophy that there is a being in this universe who has created an order of existences to make them as miserable as he can; an order of existences who will curse him forever that they were made at all. What kind of a being is that? What shall we call him? God or devil? Ormuzd or Ahriman? Goodness, or innate, inherent evil? You and I don't believe any such abnormality as this. The Christ did not, when He said: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." That is optimism; optimism, bright and dazzling, from the lips of Jesus. Love is

the deity of this universe. Love is going to do all the good it is possible to do, and work out in humanity forever the highest and the best things. Because it is love.

Now these two conceptions are utterly contradictory. They are absolutely exclusive the one of the other. If the one is true, the other is false; and if the one is false, the other is true. They can't be reconciled. There is no ground of compromise between them. They are the two masters of human thought. We can not serve them both. It is an impossibility in the nature of the case. As between these two masters of all human philosophy, of all religions, we will, as the Saviour said, "either hate the one and love the other; or else we will hold to the one, and despise the other." If we accept one of these conceptions we must, in the necessity of things, cast away the other. Acceptance of the one is, in its nature, exclusion of the other. The pessimist and the optimist are the antipodes. They never come together. They are poles, pointing opposite. And yet both these ideas I have quoted are in the Bible, in the authorized canon of inspired scripture. My text is in Eccl. iv: 3. The words of Jesus are in John iii: 16. There has been little question of the inspiration of either of these books. Ecclesiastes was in the Bible the Master read when He was in the synagogue. The gospel of John was early incorporated in the New Testament canon, and accepted as the production of John the beloved disciple. What shall we do then with such opposite and con-

tradicory statements? With these ideas that are absolutely exclusive the one of the other? They can not be brought to any common ground. There is no neutral territory. If we say that it is better in this world, as it is now constructed and governed, never to have been born, surely we can't talk about love and the glorious things that love will do. Or if we believe with the Master in the love, we can't use any such language of abject pessimism as this text, that it is better to be in our graves than on the earth, and better than either never to have had existence, never to have been compelled to live!

I would like to consider this question, if you will permit me to day. For I think that a Christian optimist can easily sift this pessimism of the preacher in Jerusalem. And I am inclined to think that the explanation of the seeming contradiction is found in the standpoint from which Solomon and the Master speak; in the posture in life in which they are doing their thinking while they speak. The Master was in the clear sunshine. His vision was undimmed. His eye was clear. His heart was all right. His spirit was in alliance with the divine. His life was faultless and pure. From that standpoint, talking with Nicodemus by night, He looked out upon this universe, and up into the face of God. He saw love everywhere—love doing its utmost—love giving itself. His clear eye could easily discern it. His true heart could beat in harmony with it. His pure spirit could breathe its sweet aroma. His life, so unstained and so guileless, could bathe in it

as in an ocean of sweet delights. And so it flowed as from a fountain, out of the depths of His nature, to say, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." That was the normal breath of The Christ when He breathed aloud. That was the language of His spirit, when His spirit was audible. That was the music of His soul, when, with gentlest touch, He played upon its keys. Could you have leaned, with John, upon His bosom, and listened to the beating of His heart, that was the silent voice of its gentle throbings within.

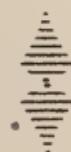
But King Solomon! We pass into a different world at the pronunciation of the name. We enter a wholly different realm of spirit. Now everything is twisted and awry. The universe is all wrong. And God does not care. Something is the matter. Something is the matter with God or with Solomon. As the first supposition is impossible, as, according to our theology, nothing can be wrong with God, we are driven to the latter conclusion, that something was terribly and fatally wrong with Solomon. And certainly there was. He gives himself wholly away in this sermon of his from which I have taken my text, and continues the process of self exposure in the entire tone of his preaching, and the whole tenor of the method of his thought.

This famous king became a preacher at an advanced stage in life. Some six years beyond what

is called in our day the dead line. He was about fifty-six years of age. He did not graduate at a theological seminary. He was no worse for that. He had had no theological training. Perhaps he was all the better for that. But he was a man of vast culture, and widely extended erudition. He had explored all departments of knowledge and was a voluminous author, a fragment of whose literary works only remains in the three books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon. If you will turn some time to I Kings, iv: 32, 33, you will get a partial idea of the extended character of his literary labor, among the cares and responsibilities of royal state. He spake three thousand proverbs. We have not more than one-fourth of them in the book we entitle by that name. He composed one thousand and five songs. We have but one. He wrote more poetry than Homer and, Virgil and Milton and Tennyson combined. He prepared a text book on botany. As the author of Kings expresses it: "He spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall."

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He was an authority also as a zoologist: "He spake of beasts and of fowl and creeping things and of fishes." He was admirably qualified intellectually to shine as a preacher, and to make a sensation in Jerusalem. He knew enough to be the best preacher the world ever saw. There was nothing the matter with his head. That was as clear as a bell.

But the heart down in that royal bosom, that was the seat of the difficulty, that was the primal source of all the trouble. He kept it pure for about forty years. During that time he devoted his growing wealth to the honor of Jehovah. He exercised his royalty in obedience to the divine command. He was greater and wiser and better than all the kings of the earth. His fame extended far and wide. Unfortunately, it reached to distant Sheba. In sore calamity to King Solomon, the queen of the south came in royal state to hear his wisdom and to admire his magnificence. "And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king: 'It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit, I believed not the words until I came, and mine eyes had seen it, and, behold, the half was not told me; thy wisdom and prosperity

exceedeth the fame which I heard.''" This was the turning point in King Solomon's career. His flirtation with the queen of Sheba seemed to upset him. Not that the queen of Sheba was at all to blame. It was his own susceptibility and selfishness. And as he walked with her about his palace and the royal grounds, as he boastingly showed her his greatness, and as she politely and coquettishly flattered him, the whole thing turned his head, his vanity ran away with him, and from that day his sun began to go into an eclipse. He forgot the God of his fathers. He plunged upon a career of excess and dissipation, and whirled henceforth in the vortex of a sixteen years' debauch. At the expiration of that time, when he was about fifty-six years of age, he became a preacher, strangely qualified to preach by his mad career of indulgence and excess. He was inspired to preach from that standpoint. As a worn out worldling, exhausted and blasé. In that capacity he was inspired to tell to humanity, in all the ages, so that none might need to learn the lesson again, just what life lived in that way-was worth, and his estimate we have in this text and its prelude, it is better to be dead than to live, and it is better than either never to have been born. Have we not the explanation of his pessimism? Do we not see, at once, just what was the matter? His sermon, if we take it as a unit, exposes the preacher, and we see him in his true character—a godless, dissipated, selfish man, finding, in his godlessness and his dissipation and his selfishness, just what life was worth, and then

pouring out his disgust and his dissatisfaction, as the preacher in Jerusalem.

And he can fairly claim, as he does in this sermon, to be qualified to judge, and to pronounce a decisive decision. His verdict is reliable. He had sat for sixteen years at the feet of the most competent teacher, though seldom the pleasantest—experience, and he was the victim of her instruction. He was not so happy as he was sixteen years before, but he knew more. The range of excesses upon which he had entered was a wide one; I might almost say, illimitable. He tried first the paths of philosophical and scientific investigation, pursued without a childlike faith and trust in Israel's God. He posed as a sceptic, and prided himself as an unbeliever—the vainest kind of vanity. As he puts it: "I gave my heart to seek and search out wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven." This does not seem on the surface a very vicious course. But the vileness of it was in the spirit in which it was done. It was undertaken in a spirit of criticism and faultfinding with the ways of the Almighty. A kind of sitting in judgment upon God. Solomon, the preacher's, first step downward, be it remembered, when he lost his head, was along the path of philosophical speculation, calling in question, and criticising, the ways of God. Adjudicating deity in this language of the self constituted and utterly incompetent court: "That which is crooked cannot be made straight and that which is wanting cannot be numbered." No wonder that in this spirit

of scepticism, in this obduracy and hardness of heart, the investigator should lose his temper, and, when he was completely broken up, should render this verdict: "In much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow."

And so, as his next step, he proposes to abnegate wisdom, and play the fool. He goes to all excesses. He throws his money in all directions. He builds him houses, and plants him vineyards, and makes him pools of water, and has great possessions, "above all that were in Jerusalem before him." When he has scattered money in all directions like water, he looks it all over, and pronounces it "vanity and vexation of spirit." The whole thing, after all, doesn't pay. "There was no profit under the sun." At this point he blossoms into a pessimist, fully ripe. "Therefore I *hated* life." "Yea, I hated all my labor which I had taken under the sun." He is out of sorts with everything, and so everything is wrong, and life is a failure, and God has made a tremendous mistake. He ought never to have created man, never to have called mortals into being.

But the preacher has not got to the bottom yet. In his utter disgust and dissatisfaction he goes to drinking in a day when there are no reformatory institutions and no white ribbons. He becomes a victim of intemperance and of still grosser vices that shall be nameless, and flaunts himself before the people in the streets of Jerusalem, he who has been known for a generation as the wisest of men, a drunkard and a roué. Ah, if the

queen of Sheba could see him now! What a different report she would take back to her own country! How would the fame dwindle, and the glamour forever fade!

When the royal faculties had become blunted by the royal vices, and thought incapacitated by a bad and wicked heart, when that matchless brain had become muddled, then the preacher undertook to solve the deep mysteries of life. He lay hold of some of its hard problems. The injustice in high places. The oppressions and cruelties of the strong against the weak, of the rich against the poor. The efficiency of one sleepless night to sap all real enjoyment of life. The strange tricks and turns in life, the queer juxtaposition on which results are hinged, where "the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong." And then the uncertainty of what comes after. After death, what? From such a standpoint, viewing life as Solomon, in the maelstrom of his vices, views it, do you wonder at his conclusion that death is better than life, that it is better than either never to have been born? Seldom has a more logical conclusion been drawn by a human mind than this conclusion of the preacher's, from the standpoint from which he was inspired to speak. As a philosophical sceptic, as an extravagant waster, as a dissipated indulger, plunged in lowest vice, pessimism was his normal plane, and life was a calamity and never to have been born the peerless boon!

The whole thing resolves itself in this, and this is the peroration of the sermon of "the preacher in Jer-

usalem"—life is what we make it under God. It is clay in our hands, pliable and plastic to any design we please. "In much wisdom is much grief," or ceaseless satisfaction, just as is the spirit in which we seek it. Pleasures minister to our better natures, or they pull us down as drag nets, just as is the spirit in which we enjoy them. Life is vanity or life is a benediction, as is the spirit in which we live it. From his stand-point Solomon was right. If you are willing to live as he lived you will reach his conclusion. You will agree with him without hesitation that it were better never to have been born. The following verses, contained in an issue of a popular periodical, will then express your final thought:

"Whenever life's song is out of rhyme,
And fate and my plans wont thrive;
Then I love to muse on that glorious time,
The time when I wasn't alive.

"Those dear old days! how they haunt me yet
With dreams of content and bliss;
Where there was not a hurt I could possibly get,
Nor a joy I could lose or miss.

"They may prate of the wondrous things that are,
Which existence alone can give;
But I know that my happiest days by far
Were the days when I did not live.

"I don't care a jot how fortune flows
To the men on each side of me;
For the fellows I envy most are those,
Who have not begun to be."

But if our whole nature rebels, if there is revolution from all this philosophy deep down in our souls, if some silent influence points us to nobler and

higher and better things, we shall find a reality in life and a fruition, now and in the ages ahead, that the loving Being who superintends this universe wisely and lovingly purposed when he said: "Let us make man." Simply, we want life with God in it.

A pastor, visiting one of his parishioners who was in deep despondency, as she held her infant child in her arms, said, "Drop that little one to the floor." With an air of wonder at such a request, she refused. "Well," said he, "for what price would you do it?" "Not for as many diamonds as there are stars." "You would not?" "No, I would not." "Do you really think that you love that child more than God loves you?" This is the final explanation of life. Above all its pitfalls and its snares, God is holding us in the hollow of his hand. Because He is love, He can not let us fall, unless, with the preacher in Jerusalem, we wrench ourselves by violent distortion out of His hands. Love makes life what it is. Love, whose dwelling place is the bosom of God.

"There is no fire place so grand,
So richly tiled, so wide and splendid,
That it can spare the glowing brand
In which its warmth and cheer are blended.

"There is no life so proud and stern,
So far removed from human weakness,
But holds some nook where love must burn
To save it from a chilling bleakness."

Let God go, and all is gone. Put out love and all is midnight. Better, far better then, as the preacher said, "never to have been born."

◎ The Bright Side. ◎

AS HAVING NOTHING, AND YET POSSESSING ALL
THINGS.—*II Cor. VI: 10.*

THE great apostle is opening a page of his own experience. He is telling to the world the secrets of his inmost heart. Having outlined the varied and multiform character of the events through which he has been called, as an apostle, to pass, he completes the page, and shuts to the door of his heart, with the sublime antitheses, of which the text is at once the conclusion and the consummation. Seemingly they are contradictions and mutually exclusive, each of the other. He has been treated by men as a deceiver; he has brought to them unerring truth. He has kept himself in obscurity and seclusion; yet the world has hung upon his words. He has been willing to die; in that willingness he has found the only true life. He has been smitten with sore sorrow; he has not been wholly slain. He has lived in penury; he has made the multitude rich. He has had nothing; he has held on to all things. These are the antitheses of his apostolic life. These attest the regularity of his ordination, where bishops and presbytery took no part.

Let us look, for a little while, at the last of these apparent contradictions—"having nothing, yet possessing all things." In the language Paul employed, the word "possess" was the word "have" with an additional prefix, that denoted still stronger adhesion. "Having nothing, yet having firm hold of all things." Nothing belonging to him; everything absolutely and forever his. It sounds like a positive and a clear cut contradiction. And yet, if we look into his wonderful life with a little care, we can see how in several ways the statement was unqualifiedly true, and the antithesis was in perfect accord.

This was evidenced, first of all, in his disposition to enjoy. In the temperament with which he had been endowed by nature, and that had been multiplied, in its resources, by grace. He was a poor man, compelled to earn his livelihood by the labor of his hands. He would not take anything for preaching, and so he had to earn his daily bread by the sweat of his brow. He labored under certain physical weaknesses that made him as he says, often the object of derision and contempt. Tradition says he was a hunch-back. Whatever the physical deformity was, he felt it sorely, and his enemies used it as a weapon of attack and abuse. He had no social enjoyments, no domestic felicities. He was a bachelor, and devoid, as it seemed, of the capacity of enjoyment in the qualities of the other sex. He never understood women, and his personal opinion of them, based on ignorance, was very low. His opinion, however, seemed to change when he

learned what matchless workers they were in the rising church; and he speaks about them with a good deal of enthusiasm a little later on. He had a reputation among the people for fanaticism, and was denounced as a disturber and a revolutionist where he was not outlawed as a fool. He had no place to live, and continued all his life on the road. Absolutely, as he says, he had "nothing." And yet he "held on" to all things. The disposition which God had given, and with which He had endowed, as with a halo, and ensphered his whole life, plucked pleasure out of everything, found satisfaction everywhere, and so entered into full and supreme possession, "possessing all things." That disposition of his was a bee that sucked honey from every flower, helping the flower to effloresce, and securing sweetness for itself. From what seemed the nightshade of reproach and poverty and humiliation and shame, that frame of spirit could extract the medicine of healing that was a matchless balm, an unfailing belledonna.

And then the apostle had a genius, we might say, a kind of exhaustless tact, that transformed the nothings into wealth, the zeros into benedictions. Out of poverty, he developed industry. Out of thorns in the flesh, sustaining grace. Out of solitude and loneliness, the deep consciousness of the presence of the divine. Out of no reputation, fadeless laurels and a peerless crown. Out of banishment, a home. Out of exile, a refuge in the heart of God. And so the man, of all others, who seemed to let things go, was the man that held them, in most

successful appropriation. "Having nothing, yet possessing all things."

He had also down in his heart that love for humanity, for the world, that made all men's possessions his own. If others had them, he was satisfied. If others were prospered, so was he. If others were happy, he was happier still. Pleasure, wealth, desirable surroundings, every resource of delight and joy—because the men and women around him had them, he had them too; and he found in them all a higher and a sweeter delight and joy than they. While, as a Christian man, full of the spirit of the Christ, modelled, in his inmost attitude of soul, after Him, he had the spirit of all true possession, he was the inheritor of all things, "all things" were his, for he was Christ's, and Christ was God's. He actualized his own philosophy. He was the embodiment of his own theory. He seized the things of spirit, and all things were his.

As we have been looking a little into the life and character of the great apostle, we have found him,—have we not?—the typal man. He may well say, as he does, in one of his epistles, "walk so as ye have us for an ensample." As we apply the exalted and exacting standard he thus presents to us, we find, at once, that there are two opposite and diverse classes of men. We meet them both in the familiar intercourse of society. Both are equally pronounced and positive. We may term them Paul's opposites and Paul's allies in the realm of spirit, or, as distinguished by the text, they are those that have every-

thing and possess nothing, and those that "having nothing, possess all things."

These opposite experiences are conditioned, first of all, upon the lack or the possession of the spirit to enjoy, the disposition with which Paul was endowed so richly, that plucks pleasure from every petal, and sweetness from every flower that grows along the pathway of our lives. There are natures that are so constituted, whether by heredity or by innate perversity, that they can not, by any possibility, be happy. They are devoid of all capacity to enjoy. They may have wealth, reputation, friends, culture, a kind of religious faith, and they will be miserable with them all. This is because, whatever they have, they are sure to distort it by anticipation of evil or fear of loss. The springs of water to which they come they defile and spoil by stirring up what mud at the bottom they can. To a sick man all sweets are bitter. Those of whom we are speaking are constitutionally sick; the taste is morbid, and there can be nothing sweet. Their way of looking at things is a kind of haze in the atmosphere of their abiding impressions, that distorts mole hills into mountains and pebbles into precipices. The desire, deep and strong, for some blessing they have not, takes away the joy that would otherwise be theirs in the blessings they have. They want two days manna instead of one, and so a process of corruption is going on in the whole, and all the manna is spoiled. A canary and a gold fish were in the same room, the one in his cage the other in the aqua-

rium. One hot day, the owner heard the gold fish say: "How I wish I could sing as sweetly as my friend up there." The canary was looking with envious eye upon the gold fish and said: "How cool it looks, I wish my lot were there." The owner complied with their wishes, and put the fish up in the air and the bird in the pool. The fish couldn't breathe and the bird only floundered.

Sometimes conscience, in this class of which I speak, doth make cowards of them all, and they can not be at peace. The voice that is within them prohibits every joy, and expels every guest who wears a smiling face, or has a pleasant word. And so, in one way or another, they stand in that attitude of spirit, they dwell habitually in that frame of mind, where, though they may have everything, they possess nothing—millionaires in outward title they are paupers in their souls.

And then there are the opposite natures, who have the spirit to enjoy, the disposition to be pleased, the "merry heart" of which Solomon speaks, that "doeth good like a medicine"—that "is a continual feast." "Having nothing" they "possess all things." Contentment is always an exhaustless mine, the vein of which grows richer the deeper we delve, and the farther we explore. A poor widow not having bed clothes sufficient to shelter her boy from the snow that blew through the cracks of her miserable hovel, used to cover him with boards. One night he said smilingly and contentedly: "Ma, what do poor folks do these cold nights, that haven't any boards to

cover up their children with?" One whose disposition had been wholly changed from crabbedness and crossness to marvellous sweetness and amiability gave the explanation in these words: "To tell you the truth, I have been all my life struggling for a contented mind, and finally concluded to sit down contented without it."

" Some murmur, when their sky is clear
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue;
And some with thankful love are filled
If but one streak of light—
One ray of God's good mercy—
Gild the darkness of their night.

In palaces are hearts that ask,
In discontent and pride,
Why life is such a dreary task,
And all good things denied?
And hearts in poorest huts admire
How love has, in their aid—
Love that not ever seems to tire—
Such rich provision made."

One stands before a piece of ingenious needlework skillfully and tastefully wrought, and is fascinated with its beauties; another sees only a defective stitch. One is thrilled by a beautiful painting; another turns the rough side of the canvas and thinks how coarse it is. One partakes of the basket of luscious fruits, another hunts out the unripe grapes and puckers up the mouth. One enters a palace of delights, the other finds the cobwebs, and is disgusted with the dust.

It is just as the apostle so wisely suggested, both in what he said and in what he did not say. There are men and women who have everything and possess nothing, and there are those who have nothing, and possess all things.

And there is a deep philosophy underlying all this. We have hinted at it, in what we have said of Paul. He plucked the principle as a ripe fruit from the tree of his own experience. It was a nugget he discovered, as he was delving deep down in his own soul. The Master comprehended it all in a very few words when he contrasted those that have and those that have not. "Unto him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away that which he hath." In that parable of the talents the man who is condemned and impoverished had one talent. And yet he didn't have it. He didn't have it, because he didn't know what to do with it, and didn't care that he didn't know. So he was a man that "had not." The rest had, because they knew enough to make use respectively of the five and the two talents, and had enough energy to apply the knowledge. That was having. That was what Paul calls possessing—laying hold of—hanging on. Multitudes follow in the steps of the one talent economist, and fold in the napkin of selfishness and bury in the earth of negleet. They have wealth and hide it in their vaults. They have culture, and are cultured leeches, drawing in the life blood of other men's best thoughts, and never giving out an idea. Omnivorous readers,

and with not a word to say. They have religion, as they call it, and keep it a secret all their lives. Secretiveness always crushes. And there are others. If they have but a crust of bread, they divide it with the first hungry man they meet. "Unlearned and ignorant men," like the apostles, they spread around the little knowledge they have so sedulously and so persistently and so prayerfully that they bless the world, and "turn it upside down." They have discovered a religion that consists in giving itself—a salvation that is found in losing.

At the basis of this distinction there is the lack or the presence of a quality of spirit that explains the whole thing. On the one hand there is indifference, on the other there is love, to our fellow men. On the one hand a cold, hard nature, impervious and impenetrable; on the other a heart pulsating and warm. The happiness of others produces only envy in these adamantine natures. It is of the very essence of things that they should occasion just as little of it as possible. Men and women with hearts are happy because somebody else is. Love has a sweeter thrill in the joy of somebody else than it has in its own. This may seem romantic. It may sound sentimental. It is the most practical thing in the world. The lever that is going to move everything upward in this world is love. The centripetal force that is going to draw all souls in unison at last is love. And love "seeketh not her own." She finds herself in the joy of other lives and in the fruition of a world outside. In this way love lays hold of the

deep realities of spirit; love enters into full possession of the things not seen. And so, do you not see that "having nothing," love "possesseth all things?"

All things here, life's pleasures and emoluments, wealth, culture, fame, reward—all are *lent* to the man who has not love. He is a borrower only. His assets are all hypothecated. All he has is mortgaged at infinite per cent. Having all things, he possesses nothing. If he looks ahead, bankruptcy stares him in the face. Judgment is a sheriff's sale. The voice of the eternities is always this: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" Whose? Whose? There is just one answer to that question: "Anybody's but mine." Hell is helpless impoverishment. The lake that burneth "with fire and brimstone" is a soul that never had a thought but for itself, and so kindled the "fire," and manufactured all through life the "brimstone."

To the believer, to the man or the woman who loves, the loan becomes the gift; in the place of the borrower you see now the owner. "All things are ours" if we love; if we give them all away. The dynamos of the spiritual world, the more they generate, the more they send forth in beatific influence, in electric currents of blessing, to all mankind.

We say, in the parlance of the market place, in the sentiment of society, that that man is rich who has so many millions; that man is wise who has monopolized so many books; that man is famous whose name is floating on so many lips, familiar as house-

hold words. This thought of Paul's we have had upon our hearts to-day says, No. The rich are they that possess all things, having, to give away. The wise are the true inheritors, who look with clear vision into the unseen things, and so open other eyes. The famed are wearers of "the crown of righteousness," because they have prepared other brows to wear it. The thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians is the final settlement of all theologies. Before it all confessions, and creeds, and catechisms, and councils, stand in judgment. If we have not "love" we are "a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." We have nothing, because we are nothing. Cyphers have no capacity of possession; nonentities have no grip. If we love, then we are of that element in this universe that "*never faileth.*" We have entered into full possession. "All things are ours." Knowledge, gifts of tongues, fountains of pleasure, stores of wealth—these vanish away. He who has only these has nothing. Love endureth forever. Love inherits the kingdom. He who breathes its hallowed inspiration possesses "all things." This world is his. All that is worth anything in it, he has. The next world is his. "In the world to come life everlasting." God is his. "He that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him." When a man or a woman is in God, there isn't much left outside of that that either of them wants. The world may say that such an one has nothing. Somebody else says: "Having nothing, yet possessing all things."



Excellent Greatness.



EXCELLENT GREATNESS.—*Ps. CL: 2.*

WHEN the greatest preacher of France, the silver tongued Massillon, was called to preach the funeral sermon of King Louis, in the cathedral at Paris, in the presence of the royal family, the legislators and the diplomatic corps, with the more exalted of the nobility of France, he took with him to the sacred desk a little golden urn containing a lock of hair of the late king. The immense audience was seated, and the stillness as of death reigned throughout the vast assemblage. Massillon arose, holding the urn in his fingers, his hand resting upon the sacred cushion. All eyes were fixed upon him. Seconds, then minutes passed. Massillon stood motionless, pale as a statue. The feeling became intense. Many believed he was struck dumb before the vast assembly; many sighed and groaned aloud; many eyes were suffused with tears; when the hand of Massillon was seen slowly raising the little golden urn, his eyes fixed upon the new king. As the hand was returned to its resting place upon the cushion, the loud, clear voice of Massillon rang throughout the great cathedral, echoing in its arches above,

“God alone is great.” With no golden urn in his hand, as he plays upon the strings of his immortal harp, a greater and more eloquent than Massillon, sang long before him, “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.”

“A certain pasha, dead five thousand years,
Once from his harem fled in sudden fears,
And had this sentence on the city’s gate
Deeply graven; ‘Only God is great.’
So these four words above the city’s noise
Hung like the accents of an angel’s voice,
And evermore from the high barbican
Saluted each returning caravan.
Lost is that city’s glory. Every gust
Lifts, with crisp leaves, the unknown pasha’s dust;
And all is ruin, save one wrinkled gate,
Whereon is written: ‘Only God is great.’”

“Ascribe ye greatness unto our God.”

But that which most impresses me, in my thought upon this subject, is the conjunction of the words “*excellent* greatness.” I have been thinking more about the adjective than about the noun. The noun is a fact, the adjective is a quality. The one tells us about a thing; the other tells us what kind of a thing it is. “Excellent greatness.” And these, as they have come to me, are the reasons.

It is “*excellent*” because it is great all round. On every side. In every direction. Great everywhere. When you descend to the plain of human greatness you come into an entirely different atmosphere. It is like descending from the Himalayas to some insignificant knoll. Here you have greatness with limita,

tions. Men and women are great, if great at all, only in some ways, in certain directions, in a limited range of character. Great in some things, and very diminutive in others. You do not very often find a man or a woman who is great *all round*—on every side, in every direction. Of whom you can say, in the language of Mr. Vrooman, speaking of Chauncey M. Depew, “the distinguished all-around man of the world.” Somewhere, if you know a man long enough, or a woman, you will discover a microscopic minuteness, and you will find that your great one is very small. Xerxes was indisputably great as he stood at the head of his vast legions. He was infinitesimally small when, in his petulance, he was whipping the waves of the Hellespont because they would not back at his bidding. Alexander was great. History thus entitles him. But he was a baby, when he wept that there were not other worlds to conquer. Cæsar was great. But he was little in that quality his immortal eulogist must admit when he says: “They tell me Cæsar was ambitious.” England’s most illustrious queen was great in noble qualities; no monarch ever wore a crown more gracefully; but she was small in her hatred of the Queen of Scots, smaller yet in her flirtation with Leicester. Napoleon was great. Superlatively great. But I read this about him the other day: “The first Napoleon had a cowardly dread of satire, and could endure any hardship rather than be made to appear ridiculous. This accounts for his enmity to the witty Madame DeStael, whose merciless tongue spared no one.

There is something more than ludicrous in the spectacle of this rude soldier with a million armed men under his command, and half Europe at his feet, sitting down in rage and affright to order Fouche to send a little woman over the frontiers lest she should say something about him for the drawing rooms of Paris to laugh at. Yet history votes this man a hero." England's matchless statesman measured nearest, perhaps, to our ideal because he was great in so many directions. Great as a scholar, great as a philosopher, great as a politician, great as a philanthropist, great as a reformer, great as a Christian. Nearest, perhaps, of any man of any age to "great all round." Bismarck, his rival, shrinks into a pygmy, because, in so many elements of character, he is small, very small.

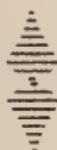
It is the familiar fact of humanity. Somewhere, in all human greatness, there is the factor of weakness. The old maxim says that "no man is great to his valet." His valet knows him too well. His littleness is sure somewhere to crop out. And I think this is one of the saddest facts of human life. The fact that our ideals always, at some point, go back on us. Our idols, if we have them, prove of clay. Our Achilles have always their vulnerable heel. Perhaps some public man to-day, some great preacher in the pulpit, or some author over whose books you pore, embodies your conception of greatness. How sad would be the discovery, should you summer and winter with that subject of your wildest admiration, that here and there were the weak points and amid

all the greatness the littleness as well! It is the limitation of our nature. Great though a man or a woman may be, and great as they may be, somewhere they are small, somewhere greatness gives out.

But we are thinking in contrast to-day of the *excellent* greatness, that is great everywhere, great on every side, harmoniously great, where in all that infinite nature there is no discordant note. The greatness of Him who is great in every thought He ever thinks, in every emotion He ever feels, in every plan He ever adopts, in every deed He ever does and in the way He always does it. "Excellent greatness" that is great everywhere.

God's "greatness" is "excellent" also because it is independent and only in Himself. Influences from without have nothing to do with it. Circumstances have played no part in its completeness—have not

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contributed an iota to its perfection. God would be just as great if there were not another being, nor a created thing, in this universe. Great independently. Great in Himself. With us, greatness is very largely the creature of circumstances. Our surroundings, very often, make us what we are. We mount with ladders, where God is on high in His nature. We seize the "tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune," or omit it, when, omitted, "all the voyage of our life is bound in shallows and in miseries."

Voltaire observes in his sententious way that "it was fortunate for Cromwell that he appeared upon the stage at the precise moment when the people were tired of kings; and as unfortunate for his son Richard, that he had to make good his pretensions at a moment when the people were equally tired of protectors." Had there been no Civil War where would be the tanner of Galena, whom a nation and a world to-day delight to honor? Our surroundings so largely, mould us. Greatness is so much a creature of the men and things outside of us. So much a product of where and when we are.

The "greatness" of our God is "excellent greatness," because it is all His own. What He is in Himself. "Who hath directed the spirit of the Lord, or being His counsellor hath taught Him? With whom took He counsel, and who instructed Him, and taught Him in the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and shewed to Him the way of understanding?" Who had anything to do with His greatness? "Ex-

cellent greatness" because it is all His own.

It is "excellent" also because it is pure. It is the gold of character where there is no alloy.

"Greatness and goodness are not means, but ends,
Hath he not always treasures, always friends,
The *good* great man? three treasures,—love and light,
And calm thoughts, regular as infant's breath;
And three firm friends, more sure than day and night,
Himself, his Maker, and the angel Death."

The poet is dreaming in the realm of the ideal. The good great man is, as the world goes, a chimera and a myth. Goodness and greatness seldom marry. Nine out of ten would rather be called "great" than "good" because the one, in a measure, crowds out the other. When we say, he is a very good man, what do we generally mean? We mean, if he is a politician, that he is not very shrewd; if he is a lawyer, that he is not very successful with juries; if he is in business, that he will never get very rich; if he is in the pulpit, that he isn't much of a preacher. Is not this so? Why, in our method of speech, goodness and greatness are divorced, and, in our way of thinking, the one excludes the other; or, if not that, puts it in the realm of the improbable. The "excellent greatness" of our God is without a stain, spotlessly pure. Infinitely good.

It is excellent, because it is humble. He who impersonated it, in human flesh, said "I am meek and lowly in heart." That was his analysis of the divine that was in Him. That was His description of the "excellent greatness" of our God. The greatness

that became "of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant;" that opens to humanity this path to greatness: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me."

"That man is great, and he alone
Who serves a greatness not his own,
For neither praise nor pelf :
Content to know and be unknown;
Whole in himself."

"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

So much of the greatness of this world is *balloon* greatness. The result of a process of inflation. "Knowledge," says Paul, "*puffeth up.*" "A little knowledge," says the proverb, "is a dangerous thing," We so easily lose ourselves, if we get a little way up. It is dangerous for those who have a weakness of heart action to climb mountains. There is a heart weakness that afflicts us all, of pride and conceit, that makes it fatal to get very high. So God, in infinite consideration, keeps us down. There is so little greatness in this world that is humble.

"But man, proud man,
Dressed in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he's most assur'd,—
His glassy essence—like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven,
As make the angels weep."

The "excellent greatness" is the greatness of Him who "came not to be ministered unto but to minister." And whose greatness is revealed in lowliest

acts. Who "maketh small the drops of water."

It is excellent, also, because it is gentle and kind. It is the tendency of strength to be severe—of human greatness to be harsh and arrogant.

"O, it is excellent
To have a giant's strength ; but it is tyrannous
To use it as a giant."

A thing the giant is very apt to do. The "excellent greatness" is gentle, and oh ! it is wondrous kind. The east and the west winds, Talmage tells us, once entered into dispute as to which was greater. "Don't you wish" said the East wind to the West, "that you had my power? When I start they hail me by storm signals all along the coast. With one sweep of my wing I have strewn the coast from Newfoundland to Key West with parted ship timber. I can lift the Atlantic ocean. I am the terror of all invalidism, and to fight me back forests must be cut down for fires and the mines of continents are called on to feed the furnaces. Under my breath the nations crouch into sepulchres. Don't you wish you had my power?" "The west wind," the story goes, "made no answer, but started on its mission, coming somewhere out of the rosy bowers of the sky, and all the rivers and lakes and seas smiled at its coming. The gardens bloomed, and the orchards ripened, and the wheat fields turned their silver into gold, and health clapped its hands, and joy shouted from the hill tops, and the nations lifted their foreheads into light, and the earth had a doxology for the sky, and the

sky an anthem for the earth, and the warmth, and the sparkle, and the gladness, and the foliage, and the flowers, and the fruits, and the beauty, and the life were the answer the west wind gave to the insolence of the east wind's interrogation." "Excellent greatness," because so gentle and so kind.

In Cromwell's time a soldier was condemned to be executed "at the ringing of the curfew." He was engaged to be married to a fair and beautiful maiden. The maiden pleaded with the judge and with Cromwell for pardon, but in vain. All preparations for the execution were made, and all awaited the signal bell. The sexton, old and deaf, threw himself upon the rope, as was his custom, but there was no sound. The young lady had climbed the belfry stair, and caught and held the tongue of the bell at the risk of her life. At length the bell ceased to swing. The deaf old sexton supposed he had rung the curfew. The brave lady descended, wounded and bleeding. Cromwell came to demand why the bell was silent. She met him, and, as the poem reads,

"At his feet she told her story, showed her hands all bruised
and torn;
And her sweet young face, still haggard with the anguish it
had worn,
Touched his heart with sudden pity, lit his eyes with misty
light :
'Go, your lover lives,' cried Cromwell, 'curfew shall not ring
to night.'"

It was the greatness of that love that gives itself. The "excellent greatness" that lays down its life for its friends.

We witness its supreme expression in Him Who came to us from the throne and the glory, Who saved us in infinite sacrifice, and, standing before His cross of ignominy and shame, we say with the immortal Massillon: "Only God is great." On Calvary, where the Son of God is bleeding, where He breathes out His life for humanity, amid those tears of infinite compassion, amid the torture and the pangs of dissolution, we see, in final and in supreme expression, the "*excellent* greatness."

"In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time,
All the light of sacred story—"

All that is great, all that is glorious, all that is beatific, in this world, or any other,

"Gathers round its head sublime,"
"Excellent greatness."



What's in a Name?



JUDAS (NOT ISCARIOT)—*John XIV:22.*

WHAT deep interest and what hallowed associations invest that memorable roll of twelve men that we call familiarly the disciples of our Lord; eleven of whom are afterward known in history as His inspired apostles, who, in their infallibility and authority, have no peers, and, in their endowments and gifts, have no successors. That imperishable roll is written three times upon the pages of this revealed word where it will last while paper and printing press remain; and it is written up yonder, graven in the foundations of the walls of the city, there to remain forever when paper and printing press are no more. As we read over that illustrious roll, written thrice upon these pages, with a single change graven in those walls on high, we are conscious of different and varied impressions. Some have attained great prominence, and what we may almost call primacy, in the historic Church. Others of the twelve are of less prominence, and yet clearly identified in history, afterward immortalized in tradition. But an interest attaches to still others of

this memorable roll from the fact that, though their names are written here three times and graven in those walls of immortality, we do not know anything about them, and, in their imperishable fame, they are in utter obscurity. The immortal *unknown!* Philip, one of the very first the Saviour met and called to His side, and never heard of except on three occasions, ; once when, if Andrew will go with him, he will tell Jesus that some Greeks want to see Him; another, when he expresses the sentiment that \$28.00 worth of bread will not be sufficient that all that multitude may take a little; and the third, when he asks to see the Father, and says he will be satisfied, compelling the rebuke of his Master: "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" That is his biography! All there is of it. One of the twelve apostles of the Lord, a name inscribed in material up yonder that will not crumble when granite melts and marble pulverizes. Simon, the Canaanite. How much do we know about him? A man who spent three years under the shadow of another Simon, illustrious, renowned, and is distinguished from him by his geography. "Judas, not Iscariot." Who once asked the Master a question. One inquiring thought in three years. One manifestation of interest in one thousand days spent with Jesus. So far as history tells us anything. "Judas saith unto Him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" A momentous question. The wonder is that he

never asked any more. One who could put such a question as that, and who had such a marvelous opportunity, such a grand chance, to get good answers. In the roll of disciples, as given by Matthias, his name does not appear. There is mention of one Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddeus. It is the same man. This Judas, the record of whose life is that he put one question to his Lord, is unknown to us, although he is named so particularly, "Judas, the brother of James," "Lebbaeus, whose surname is Thaddeus," Judas Lebbaeus Thaddeus, brother of James, not Iscariot. It seems as though we were hunting after him in the woods of a multitudinous name. He is identified, but about in the same way as the company of laborers that work on our canals and railroads, who are known by the number on their hats. This disciple was number ten in that circle of twelve, number ten on those walls immortal.

How considerate and thoughtful was the historian, John, when he recalled that incident, and knew how little this brother of his would be known, that he should say, in all kindness and gentleness, "Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot." It was just like John to do that. It was just like John's Master, on Whose bosom he leaned, and Whose inspiration he caught. There is so much in a name. A rose would not smell as sweet by any other name, nor myrrh taste as bitter. The name rose, in all that it recalls, is a pleasant prompter of the olfactories, and myrrh is suggestive of bitterness. There is so much in a name. That name Judas stands for treason. It at once sug-

gests Iscariot. The biographer who doesn't mean Iscariot has to say so, or he will be misunderstood. If John had not made this qualification, everybody would have thought that that vile traitor was once inspired to ask a sensible question, that once in his life he got on the edge of an exalted spirituality! But no, it was not Iscariot. It was "Judas, not Iscariot"—the other Judas, who is known only that he was not that one.

Or, on the other hand, and differently, take the name Peter. We almost see a rock spring up at our feet at the mention of the word, and assume massive proportions and gigantic strength. Thomas! It means doubt. It represents the agnosticism of 1850 years ago. John! It is the synonym of love.

Or go back farther still. Recall those Old Testament names. And how much there is in them. Abraham, the father of vast multitudes, of the millions upon millions upon millions that should believe, father of the faithful. Israel, a man mighty with God, who has struggled and prevailed! Elijah, strong and valiant and heroic in the Lord his God! What a transformation in a name when Saul of Tarsus became Paul, the apostle! Saul, the persecutor; Saul, the bigoted Jew; Saul, of the blood red hands and the murderous heart. Paul, the penitent preacher; Paul, the master builder of the early Church; Paul, counting "all things but loss for the excellency of Christ Jesus, his Lord." Saul! Paul! John Knox! It seems almost to sound with the reverberations of the granite hills of Scotland he consecrated to Christ for

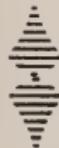
all time! Florence Nightingale! Miss Dix! Clara Barton! How like a canvass do these names loom before us, and, in fairest shades and softest colors, how do we see limned upon their imperishable texture self sacrifice, endurance, heroism, "pure and undefiled religion." And what shall I say of that Name that is above every name—the Name at which every knee shall bow and every tongue confess?

"There is no name so sweet on earth,
No name so dear in heaven—
The name that at our Saviour's birth
Was by the angels given."

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In the believer's ear ;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear."

Or take the dark and revolting colors, as we look upon a very different picture, as we recall the names that are identified with earth's scenes of base iniquity.

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uity and ever recurring crime, and how much there is in a name! The brand was on Cain's forehead while he lived, and the brand has been upon his name ever since the day he slew his brother. We almost see the tawny skin and listen to the woes of the colored race in the name of Ham. How Delilah sounds of treachery! How the name of Sisera hisses with the hostility of the enemies of the Lord! How does Ahab reverberate with the rebellion and apostacy that closed the windows of heaven and kept back the rain, according to the word of Elijah! Nero! It seems to trickle with the blood of martyrs, and to gleam with the lurid fires he kindled at their feet!

Sometimes a name that is applied in derision and scorn becomes historic, and, through the deeds of those who bear it, is typical of elemental principles and immortal truths. We read in the Acts that "believers were first called Christians in Antioch." It was a term of abuse. It identified them with Christ the Crucified, the executed criminal of Galilee, with a man who had been hanged. "Christians." But how that name has been ennobled, hallowed, transfigured by the heroism of the ages, by the self sacrifice of the pure and the true and the good of all ages and times, by the amelioration of humanity, by the civilization of the peoples, by the regeneration of the world! That word "Christian," applied in contempt in Antioch, bounds the world's progress, outlines the world's hope.

The term "Whig" was applied in early English history as a term of derision, denoting whey,

that which has no solid substaneey, no fixed consisteney; it meant dough-face and trimmer. But so worthy and so stalwart and so true were they who bore that name, that it took on a new aspeet, and unnumbered have been the statesmen of Britain, down to the greatest statesmen of them all, who have been proud to wear it, and who have emblazoned it as an insignia of honor.

Methodist was a term applied to the followers of Wesley, in ridicule of the new methods of worship they introduced into England's quiet ritual. Those methods gave it life, they have been carried over the sea and have filled this land of ours with the warmth of Christian love, the glowing ardor of religious zeal, and there is no nobler name in christendom, no grander title of the followers of the Lord. The humblest child of God who walks under that banner of Methodism has reason to be proud of his colors. Those colors have been made radiant and magnificent with the devotion of her gallant, her heroie sons.

How does the romaneist, Scott, throw a whole volume of history into the boast of his hero, in Rob Roy, in the force of his name as it falls like hot shot from a gun:

"My foot is on my native heath,
And my name is MacGregor!"

In our familiar intercourse of every day, how disagreeable and revolting beeome the names of those whose charaeters we dislike, by whose natures we are repelled. And how sweet are the names of those

we love. I have not much doubt that the young men who fell in love with Job's daughters thought their names were charmingly sweet, and they were these: "Jemima," "Kezia" and "Keren-happuch." They were lovely to those who loved them.

"Who hath not owned, with rapture smitten frame,
The power of grace, the magic of a name?"

The explanation that the disciple, John, thought it necessary to make in this text, that the Judas who asked this question was not Iscariot, is suggestive of the alarming fact that a good name, a name of honor and dignity, can, by a base and wicked life, become a title of disgrace, and a synonym of dis-honor. Judas Iscariot! It is sulphurous with the atmosphere of the lost. It savers of utterest pollution. And yet, that name Judas, when it was given by his mother to that babe who would one day disgrace it, was one of the most honored and exalted in Israel. It was the same as Judah in Hebrew, and was identified with all the glamour and grandeur that encircled that chosen tribe from whom should come some day the Lion of the tribe of Judah—whom a Judah should betray. When he took that money, when the clank of those pieces of silver was heard, he plunged that name of highest honor into the pit of lowest infamy, and, the glory it portrayed was covered with the slime of the perfidy that made it a hissing forever.

The monument erected, in such matchless beauty, on the hill side in Saratoga county, N. Y., overlook-

ing the plains that witnessed the surrender of Burgoyne, has a statue in each of three of its four corners above its base, while the fourth is a vacant niche. The other three are generals who were associated in command, the fourth bears the name of Benedict Arnold, where there stands no statue. He deserved none. The name is vocal of his base betrayal and the vacant space is eloquent of his dishonor.

The legend goes that Reputation, Love and Death once started forth to travel in different directions over the earth. At parting, each told where he might be found. Death said they would hear of him in battles, hospitals, and where famine or disease were raging. Love said they might look for him among the children of the poor, at marriage feasts, and always among the virtuous and pure. Reputation said reluctantly, that if he once left a man, they might never look for him there again.

“Good name, in man and woman, dear my lord,
Is the immediate jewel of their souls.”

Who steals my purse, steals trash: 't is something, nothing;
'T was mine, 't is his; and has been slave to thousands:
But he that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed.”

He who sells the birthright of his name finds “no room for repentance though he (seek) it carefully and with tears.” The Jezebels, the Borgias, the Philips II, the Henry VIII, the De Medici—these are names that will resound through the ages with the claimor of their crimes, and the eternities will re-echo with the outcry of their cruelties.

The lesson is a serious and practical one. What are we doing with the name we bear? It is the name that will be ours through the eternities. Up yonder all titles will be forgotten and we shall be known by the name our mothers gave us. What meaning are we attaching in these lives of ours to the names we bear? As the product of character, as the ripe fruit of what we are, what shall be the significance of that name when it shall be pronounced for the first time at the bar of judgment, and as it shall remain forever? Shall it be an insignia of ineffable glory, or a badge of dark dishonor? Shall it be a name written in the book of life, or a name never mentioned in the converse of heaven, in the memories of the skies?

As I have suggested, it was a humble and lowly station that was assigned to this disciple of our text, when he was identified only by what he was not. "Not *Iscariot*." Not the bad one. A negative character only. Not known to us for any good he ever did, but only that he did not do the base and wicked deed that was consummated in the presence of the priests. And yet, how many and how multiplied are his companions in every age and time. Negative quantities only. Who have not done much hurt, because they have not done much of anything. "Not *Iscariot*." In the family, simply living on, eating their three meals a day, and sleeping their eight or ten hours. In society, dead weights. So much baggage to be carried. In the Church, pillows, not pillars; sleepers, not beams. Not notoriously bad. And not much of anything else.

And yet, I do not know but that it will be a very blessed thing when we come to the close of these fitful, changeful lives of ours, if it can then be truly said, even if nothing more can be said, that we are not of the bad, and vicious, and depraved—"not Iscariot." It was very much the encomium of the Master upon the approaching Nathanael: "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom there is no guile." Nothing bad. If we shall escape the evil of the world, where there are so many temptations, so many hostile forces, so many unseen powers, moving mightily upon our souls; if we shall come off unscathed, our garments undefiled, "conquerors and more than conquerors through Him that loved us,"—not Iscariot, not allies of evil, not lost victims of sin, not captives at last of the great enemy; surely this will be the anthem of our endless song, and the theme of loudest praise. If, in our opinions, where there are so many vagaries, so many refuges of lies, we are not led into fatal error. If these hearts are not burned away by base, unworthy loves. If these souls are not bartered for the world, and that final question put, "what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

The only reason that this Judas of our text was "not Iscariot," was that the Master kept him from being that, and held him in the hollow of His hand. By the grace of God we are what we are. There were the two Judases in the immediate presence of the Christ. Judas Iscariot sold his Master. "Judas, the brother of James," "Lebbaeus, whose surname was

.Thaddeus," "not Iscariot," wrote that epistle of Jude, that thunders down through the ages with its denunciation of sin, its ceaseless cannonade against the ungodly. Where was the difference? In that sovereign grace on which we are absolutely dependent, without which a world would be Iscariot, but by which we shall be lions, every one, of the tribe of Judah.



The Church and the Men.

Go, CALL THY HUSBAND.—*John IV:16.*

THE Master is conversing with a woman, who has had no advantages in life, who, in the esteem of His race, is reprobate and an outcast, and who, on the terms of Jewish theology, has not the remotest chance of getting to heaven. He has probed into her inmost soul, has found there a spark of genuine spirituality, and has kindled it, in a moment, into a flame. She is an aspirant for the "living water." She wants to be a good woman, and, so far as the idea has taken tangible shape, she proposes to be a christian. The first duty the Master suggests, as she forms this resolve, is that she shall go, call her husband, and, in his companionship and society, follow her Lord.

This incident leads us at once to think of the absent husbands to-day. The absent fathers, brothers and sons come with them to our thought. The milder weather of returning spring and the favorable condition of the roads emphasize forcibly and impressively the theme of the hour. The preacher's most alarming rival, in this year 1899, is the

wheel. It threatens wholly to supplant him. I would rather preach in the open air, in a high wind dead against me, than against a wheel, whatever the manufacture. The best friend a preacher has today is a punctured tire.

Where the wheel is outgrown, and where scorching has no attractions, the cares of business and the interests of politics take their place. It becomes difficult for a spiritual influence to squeeze in edgeways. Almost any device to attract attention would be legitimate. Would that the Church had the ingenuity to invent it. If we could provide some such entertainment as a town caucus for instance, we should be confident of success. I tried a prayer meeting side by side with one of these institutions a few years ago. The prayer meeting came out several lengths behind, and the caucus scored one. It was not because the caucus had under consideration subjects of greater importance, or interests more vital to men, though the men were all there. The caucus considered the nomination for village offices, for which nine out of ten care not a flip. The prayer meeting was called for the consideration of a theme for which men, no less than women, care everything. I saw at one hour, one evening, about thirty at a prayer meeting, including seven men, and, at another hour the same evening, seven hundred at a minstrel show, and the proportion of men in no degree deficient. It was a very good minstrel show. It was conducted by some of our brightest and most interesting young men. But the prayer meeting was as important, view it from

any aspect of thought you please. It was as intellectual, as ennobling, as spiritualizing, whatever the multiplicity of its imperfections.

Now all this is utterly unnatural. If a town caucus or a minstrel show were held once a week, and a prayer meeting once a year, perhaps the apparent interest, and the comparative numbers, would be reversed. Perhaps there would be empty benches at the caucus and the minstrel show, and a jam at the prayer meeting. Novelty goes a great ways. The famous Athenians have many successors who spend "their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing." Paul conducted the first prayer meeting among those citizens of Athens, and the streets were thronged. Had he made a weekly appointment, the numbers might have diminished and the interest dwindled. This is the most satisfactory explanation of the contrast between the crowd at a circus and the scarcity at a church service, especially of the masculine gender. In themselves there is no superior attraction, bad as human nature is, in a ring over a church parlor, or in a clown over a preacher. The infrequency largely explains the apparent success.

I believe that when a baby is born, there is no essential difference of moral and spiritual tendencies inwrought in its sex. There are certain constitutional and temperamental contrasts that are a matter of sex. And the baby boys will incline to play horse, and the baby girls to play doll. And yet these contrasts are often found wanting, and the boy will take the doll, and the girl the horse. Certainly there are no morale ele-

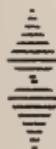
ments that are wrapped up in the composition of a baby girl, and that are not found in a baby boy. One is just as good as the other at the starting point in the race of life, and, other things being equal, they will keep pretty nearly neck to neck all the way along. The surroundings and the environment in the early life of the boy are all against him, while, in the growing period of girlhood, they are very generally favorable. It is the noise and bustle and confusion of the street against the quiet and calm and orderliness of the home. At the period when the best fellow means the best fighter, the best girl means the sweetest and the gentlest specimen of her sex. But as the boy and the girl are made, there is no essential inferiority, as to intellect, or, more important still, as to morals. The one wants to be good and go to heaven just as naturally as the other. The one holds the head just as high as the other—alike poised toward the stars.

I therefore reject, most resolutely, any explanation of present conditions that argues an essential difference, a temperamental contrast, in the one sex as compared with the other. I believe that men constitutionally and temperamentally are just as much inclined to all that is worthy and noble and upright and good as women, and that Paul's counsel as to "whatsoever things are lovely and of good report" is addressed with equal force and with equal applicability to either sex. Nature's nobleman is man, male and female, created in the image of God, with dominion, joint and separate, over the creatures. God's

image is on the soul, where there rises no question of sex. Everybody is reading David Harum. I confess frankly that I do not like the book. The love story that runs through parts of it is excessively dull. The dialect becomes wearisomely tedious. The whiskey drinking gives the whole thing a bad odor. And David Harum's summary dismission of church going is an insult to respectable society, and utterly unworthy of any respectable man.

I am inclined, entertaining these convictions, to account for the alarming conditions that confront us, our women generally in church and considerably in prayer meeting, our men at the office or the club or the store or at the factory or on the lounge, in two ways. First, the loss, temporarily, on the part of the men, of the sense of fairness and equity in this whole matter; and, secondly, a serious mistake on their part, also, as to the relative importance of conflicting claims, when certain interests clash, and when business and affairs call one way, and the services of re-

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ligion call the other. First, I think that many of my sex, of which I am grateful to be a member, are forgetting the sense of fairness and equity, that has been so honorably and so worthily displayed in other ways toward the gentler sex. We have been devoting a large share of our time in recent legislation, and a considerable space upon the pages of our statute books, to the emancipation and elevation of woman. It is the brightest spot in our system of legal enactment. It most clearly manifests the essential nobility that inheres in the manliness of man. The male man. We have been dissolving fetters that once were forged. We have been severing chains that once were welded. We have been repudiating yokes that once were galling. We have made the slave our queen. And all doors are flying open. All avenues invite. The academy, the college, the university, the counting room, the office, the professions—all stand before woman to day with open gates, bidding her enter, and enjoy their amplest, largest awards. This has been the essential, the inherent, fairness, that dwells in the bosom of an honorable and a manly man. It has compelled equality for woman. Not many years from now, under the same compulsion of absolute equity, by the laws enacted by men, she will teach and doctor and preach and vote, in equal numbers, and with equal success, with the voluntary donor of her coming rights, and her growing obligations.

But this same sense of fairness, that has compelled this result, in the vital interests of our holy religion

has been forgotten. Here man has lost sometimes his chivalry. In the services of the sanctuary, four-fifths many times are women. In the circle for prayer, sometimes seven-eighths. In Sunday school work, nine-tenths. May we not appeal to this inherent sense of fairness and equity in the manly bosom, that in so many spheres, has done so much and so nobly for woman? As we have emancipated her from grossest, basest servitude, as we have opened to her widely every door of usefulness and opportunity, let us not leave her so alone to do the world's most vital work, to conserve the most sacred interests, to uphold the citadel of our most holy faith. For it is unmanly, it is dishonorable thus to desert her. The abandonment and the glaring courtesy should mantle all our cheeks with shame.

Then the second consideration that I have suggested seems to me pertinent to this subject. In the present conditions that confront us, I think that many of our men have not only forgotten the sense of fairness and equity to the gentler sex, but that they have also seriously mistaken the relative importance of the interests that are to-day committed to their trust. In their conduct, if not in their hearts, they have resolutely and deliberately concluded to place business, and public affairs above the services of religion, and to give the former and not the latter the first place. That is a simple matter of fact. I think it will be admitted. When the two interests clash, the larger portion of our men propose to attend to business and affairs, and leave religion to the women. Some

of those who are under forty years of age, and, in sporadic cases, beyond that limit, have put the wheel in this highest, most demanding place. It has become a substitute for the sanctuary. The stately tone of the church bell has no longer a melody in the ears, amid the tinkling of a little bell to which they have given their real selves. Now, I am not going to advance any radical theories. I have not a syllable to say about the use of the wheel on Sunday. Simply a suggestion as to the use of the wheel when our conscience tells us we ought to be in Church; when we prefer a spin to a sermon, and a ride over the hills to a seat in the congregation. I say that is a reversal of all right relations. That is a betrayal of highest trusts. That is treason to our truest self.

And I would not, by any means, belittle the claims of business and the professions, or the importance of public affairs in which many are so manfully and so honorably engaged. If they should neglect their business, it would be a cold day for the Church. If they did not keep money in their till, I don't know what would become of missions. And if they who are loyal to the interests of honesty and integrity in public affairs, and who are laboring for purity in politics, should withdraw from the contest, the reign of righteousness would cease, and the Church would go to the wall.

This industry in business, this fidelity in public affairs, are vital to the Church, and not one word of mine shall diminish or chill the manly enthusiasm, or the untiring spirit that is displayed. But may I

not enter this plea? That we shall put the interests of our holy religion close beside these interests that so many times are uppermost? That we shall thoughtfully arrange the appointments of the one with reference to the arrangements of the other. That the two may not be in conflict but in harmony. That there may not be collision, as heretofore, but co-operation. That the industry that has been displayed in our own, may characterize our attention to the Lord's, business. That our fidelity to public affairs may extend to the affairs of the soul. I stood with unqualified and unbounded admiration, a few years ago, in the presence of an audience of noble and manly men, at the banquet of the Knights Templar. I recognize the claims of that most worthy order. I am glad that it has enlisted in its service many of our best and ablest men. Men who, at its bidding, will march through driving rain, and throng a church service if it is appointed by the order. But the Chief Captain of the Commandery is the Head of the Church. The Church is His Own ordained institution before the first knight templar was born. Nay, that little band of heroic men and women in the first centuries who laid down their lives for that Master were knights templar every one, and when we follow in their steps, and give ourselves, we reflect most clearly the spirit of this noble order, and we rise to holiest knighthood.

The Church needs, needs imperatively our men. Woman may do her work never so well, as woman does, and for which her praise shall be forever within

the gates. But she cannot do the work of men. Our men cannot discharge their responsibility, hanging some day to her skirts. He Who once said, "Go, call thy husband," says to day: "Come husband, father, brother, son; come, where mightiest interests summon you, where claims that are vital are uttering their voice, where the Church stands waiting for your ministry."



The Ascension of Our Lord.

IS NOT THIS THE CARPENTER?—*Mark VI: 3.*

THE ascension of our Lord was the event of supreme exaltation in His earthly life, of which single moments in His past gave glimpses, and of which those moments were the sublime foretelling. Now and then, in the days gone by, there were flashes of the ineffable glory into which He now passed, glimpses of the majesty, and supremacy, and dominion, upon which He now entered.

There was a flash of that supreme exaltation in the presence of the doctors, when, at twelve years of age, the boy in their midst astonished them with His questions and answers. It gleamed forth again at Jordan when, at His baptism, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit, in the form of a dove, descended and rested upon Him. It flashed and flamed and glowed with dazzling brilliancy, when, on that moment of Transfiguration, "His face shone as the sun," and "His raiment was white as the light." The mob, on that last night, caught a glimpse of it and fell before Him, prostrate and helpless, until He veiled it again, and surrendered Himself meekly into their hands, "led as a sheep to the slaughter," and

"as a lamb dumb before her shearers" opening "not His mouth." In the moment of dissolution, when the Author of Life gave up His spirit, the glory flashed in the gloom of the world's universal night, and the graves were opened, and the rocks rent, and the veil of the temple was torn in twain, and the testimony was compelled from the lips of an enemy, "Truly this was the Son of God." These were glimpses only, along that lowly and that humble life, of the glory from which the wonderful Son of Mary came, and back to which, in His ascension, He returned.

When, on that eventful Sabbath that this question of the text was put, the people were astonished at His wisdom, and impressed with the manifestations of His power, we are told that they were offended in Him. Because He was "the carpenter," they would have nothing more to do with Him. With wholly different emotions we stand before that still more thrilling scene, that sublime consummation, as the clouds receive Him, and the sky opens its door, and, in wrapt contemplation, we put the question again: "Is not this the carpenter?"

Lowliest humiliation, in that ascension hour, culminates in highest exaltation. He who rises to His throne, comes to it from the carpenter's bench. He sits upon the one because He toiled at the other. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The glory of that hour, the open heavens, the angelic convoy, the clouds His choristers, cast the halo of their grandeur and sublimity around that humble,

lowly life, and it is “the carpenter” of Nazareth whom all worlds adore.

In that event so wonderful, as the path to the throne lies open, all those conditions in life that we consider favorable are put in a subordinate place, and those we deem adverse and hostile are uplifted in this sublime exaltation. The ascension of our Lord is the reversal of all our ways of looking at things, and of our view of life, and its highest, best bestowal. It will not be denied that Olivet, with its crowning scene, was the supreme consummation of human life. There the earthly evolved into the heavenly in highest apotheosis. When Jesus “ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,” He exalted those conditions of life He had chosen, and those surroundings He had selected, to the supreme plane, and the first place. In their ultimate results, therefore, they were the conditions that were most to be desired, and that could be wrought out, in character and life, into the highest and sublimest sovereignty of soul. And what were they? The answer lies in this question, put so many years ago, “Is not this”—this man so wonderful, so exalted, so unapproachable in His sublime nature, “Is not this the carpenter?”

Our first and most familiar distinction in society is that between capital and labor. Capital is envied, and labor is despised. To be of the capitalistic class, we will resort to any degree of ingenuity, and put forth any amount of effort, and devote every capacity and energy and activity of soul. If we are

members of what we call the laboring class, we deem it a misfortune of birth or of surroundings, and live always in hopes that we may pass out of it into the envied estate of capitalistic possession and control. There is a degree of confusion the while in the distinction itself. Some of the hardest workers in the world's work today are of the class we call capital. The eight hour system is with them more often exchanged for sixteen, while the eight allotted to rest and sleep are sorely disturbed. On the other hand, many a man is finding genuine rest in honest labor and worthy toil, of whom the wisest of men has said that "the sleep of the laboring man is sweet." The bulk of the unhappiness of this world is in brown stone fronts, and most of the anxiety is in gilded offices and costly counting rooms. But let that pass. These are the two classes: the one, as we theorize about it, to be envied, and the other, to be scorned, capital and labor.

He who ascended from Olivet, He who was "the carpenter," was a laboring man; He never owned a dollar of capital. Up to thirty years of age, His hands were calloused, and His muscles hardened, and His days laborious. He was enured to hard work. Whenever we draw this distinction, whenever we envy capital and despise labor, it will be well to remember that the ascending Saviour, mounting to his universal throne, was not a capitalist; He was a laboring man. This will serve to keep us humble if we are favored with this world's goods, if we are of the class the world calls capital. And it will remind

us that we are in the best of company, our companionship is the most exalted because it is divine, if we are familiar with toil, if we are, as the world pronounces its judgment, of the laboring class.

Then there is the second distinction we draw so familiarly between riches and poverty—those who have their good things in this life, and those who have not. However true it may be, and however well we may know it to be true that the rich are characteristically unhappy and prevailingly wretched, crippled with care and rankled with anxiety, and the poor are in comparison moderately happy for the very reason that they have so few expectations, still we envy the rich, and we commiserate the poor. As between Dives on his divan and Lazarus at his gate, we would take our part with Dives, and leave Lazarus to the dogs. Money makes the mare go, because money is a desirable thing, and we don't believe we can have too much of it. And yet that ascending Saviour never had enough to pay for a night's lodging. As he said, He had "not where to lay His head." He had no way to pay for it. He was a poor man. In His ascension, He put the crown not on wealth but on poverty; the corona that hour was not upon the brow of the rich, but of the poor.

The distinction that we draw so deeply between the educated and the uneducated met with a singular reversal on that ascension day. In the technical instruction of the schools, the Nazarene was an uneducated man. When the crowd were confounded with

His matchless insight into truth, His universal knowledge of affairs, they put the question that seemed to have no answer: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" He hadn't been to school since He was a little boy. Very early in life He had to work, and help His father earn a living. Blessed are the boys and girls whose parents can send them forth into life with a liberal education. One of the saddest things I know is where a boy or girl, whose parents are abundantly able to furnish it, scorns a good education and does not want to go to school. It is a life long encripplement, and so a life long calamity. The Lincolns and the Johnsons and the Garfields, masterspirits as they were, would have risen to mightier mastery still had they had favorable surroundings, and the advantages of school and college. Rail splitting and the tailor's bench and the tow path were educators, and they drew forth matchless qualities of manhood; but they could have been improved upon, and could have well given place to the languages and mathematics.

But the ascending Lord on Olivet was an uneducated man. He knew nothing of the wisdom of the schools. He had no advantages. His youth was spent amidst His tools. And our distinction is reversed again. The crown is on the brow of deprivation of highest privilege. Refinement and culture are in the background. The school room and the college hall do not enter into the problem. Rising from that mountain top, in the glory of the clouds, there passes from our view not only a laboring man, a

poor man, but one who had no advantages of education, who had never followed the curriculum of the schools.

But the humiliation that culminated in supreme exaltation on Olivet, comprehended still lower depths. That ascending Jesus, amid the clouds, heaven open to greet him, the Father waiting to receive Him at His right hand, was an *excommunicated* man. Society had cast him out. Judaism had rejected Him. He had been excluded from the synagogue. He was turned out of the church. Another distinction, and a very wide and searching one, is reversed in that ascension. If there is anything we regard as desirable in life, anything that we think of as essential, as a kind of *sine qua non*, without which we would not want to live, it is reputation, a good name, to stand well with society, and if we are Christian men and women, to be recognized and fellowshipped in the church.

How it would startle us to awake some morning, and find that we were outlawed from society, and disfellowshipped from some chosen fraternity, and excluded from the membership of the church! That society would not recognize us, and the church would not have our name on its roll! Life would be a burden, and we would not know which way to turn. This was the position for about two years of that ascending Lord. Had you mentioned His name to any regularly constituted Jew, you would have learned that the name was to be whispered with

withering scorn, because the name of an excommunicated man.

Still one step lower, the only one left to the bottom, from which the ascending Son of Man mounts that day to the top—He was an executed man. We all hope to stay out of the courts, save as unimpeached and unimpeachable witnesses, or those who take an honorable part in the conduct of judicial cases. We all hope that no grand jury will ever have occasion to investigate us. That no indictment will ever be served on us. No trial, certainly, ever be instituted. No sentence pronounced. No penalty inflicted. All this would be worse than death. Better go out of life, than live a convicted criminal, or bear the brand of the sentence of the law! Just this He endured who mounted that day to His throne. He was indicted; He was tried; He was convicted; He was sentenced; He was executed for capital crime. No depth lower, to which He could descend. And from it he rose to the supernal heights. From a convict's doom to the world's undisputed dominion. From the gibbet so infamous to the glory so ineffable.

This is what impresses me as we linger around that thrilling, that beatific scene. The Son of God, our Saviour, ascends that day amid the clouds, and sits down at the right hand of God, whence “He shall come to judge the quick and the dead”—He who was the carpenter—a laboring man, not a capitalist; a poor man, not well to do; an uneducated man, not a scholar though He “knew letters” so

well, "having never learned;" an excommunicated man, turned out of the church; an executed man, hung on the Roman gallows. Could there be humiliation more galling, an emptying of Himself more entire and complete, a depth of degradation lower than this, to which by any possibility, He could step? Indeed, as the apostle said, "He made Himself of no reputation." From that utterest humiliation, laboring, poor, uneducated, excommunicated, executed, He ascended to the inaccessible heights. He sat down "at the right hand of God." He put at the key of the arch of all truth its key stone; "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Capital stands for control. Riches for possession. Knowledge for power. Position in society and the church for honor. Freedom from accusation for innocence in the judgment of the world. The ascending Saviour had surrendered them all. But, losing them, He found them. Control did I say? He assumed universal dominion. Possession? He entered upon an endless inheritance. Power? He wielded the sceptre of resistless authority. Honor? He had all praise and glory in all worlds. Innocence? He was spotlessly pure, "the Holy One Who inhabiteth eternity."

And so, on that ascension day, He put side by side with the truth that "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted," the companion truth that completes the circle of supreme revelation, "He that loseth his life shall save it."

That scene on Olivet embodies the deepest realities. The last event in that life on earth, it was the final revelation from God. As the Son of Man passes through that rift in the open skies, He enacts ultimate truth—His lowliest humiliation, becoming, in a moment, highest exaltation, defines all religion. Thrilled with the wondrous vision, we see as never in all that life before what it is to be a christian; we learn at last how the humblest disciple, in His humility, mounts to His waiting mansion, and His kingdom, and His throne.



Evil, The Highest Good.

NO CHASTENING FOR THE PRESENT SEEMETH TO BE
JOYOUS, BUT GRIEVOUS.—*Heb. XII: 11.*

COUNT IT ALL JOY WHEN YE FALL' INTO DIVERS
TEMPTATIONS.—*Jas. I: 2.*

WE HAVE, in these verses, the human and the divine side of one common truth. We must look within the dark, black garb of the one, and see the angel who stands thus strangely and mysteriously clothed in the other—the angel of a loving purpose sent on holiest mission by a loving God: And the counsel of James is given with reference to trial in its sorest, grossest form; the temptation to evil and to sin. To a noble nature this is always the severest, the most overwhelming, blow. No trial came to our Master so painful, none so severe, in all that life of sorrows, as the testing time in the wilderness, because it was a period of temptation to sin. Gethsemane was dark and heavy with the anguish of a bleeding soul, bearing the woes of humanity. Calvary was densely clouded with the torture of a dissolving body, bearing the sins of the world. The wilderness of Judea was the midnight of the struggle of a pure nature with the suggestions to disobedience and sin.

It was the darkest hour in all that shadowed life of Him Who was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." "Sensibility," says Lacon, "would be a good portress, if she had but one hand. With her right, she opens the door to pleasure, but with the left, to pain." The acutest suffering of which an immortal nature is susceptible inheres in its sensibility to sin,—its perception of its exceeding sinfulness, and of the pollution of the soul sin touches. This was the extreme moment in the career of the Christ. This is the critical, the decisive hour in every human soul. At that moment James lifts up his voice and says: "Count it all joy"—"count it all joy." If this be so, then we may safely apply the principle to life's sorrows every one. If the sorest and the saddest of them all is to be the theme of rejoicing, the anthem of delight, then we can take the whole range of life's trials in our hands, and say with David: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted;" it is a grateful and a blessed thing. "Originally," says Dr. Hillis, "the tortoise and the eagle stood side by side, but one struggled upward, and the other was content as he was." The tortoise is man overwhelmed and cast down by affliction, oppressed by life's sorrows, burdened with its griefs, moving onward with slow and hopeless pace. The eagle is man triumphant in sorrow, victorious over evil, mounting with resistless pinions, soaring to the stars.

In my theology to-day this doctrine lies at the base. It is fundamental to the belief I confidently entertain in a kind and loving God, pos-

sesed of sufficient power and resources to prevent what is not kind and loving in the universe He has made, and in the lives of the beings He has created. At the starting point, in the beginning, the choice was wholly with Him whether or not evil should enter; evil in any, and evil in all, its conceivable forms. Evil, therefore, as sure as God is kind and loving and able to manage His own universe, would not have entered were it not, in His far-reaching wisdom, and His unerring purpose, an ultimate, higher good. If He could not, as the apostle says He will, raise us above the angels who know no sin because we have known sin, its struggles and its victories, He would not have conferred upon Adam the power of choice that involved the possibility of choosing the wrong way. I am inclined to think that the whole experience of human sin, and life's resultant trial and conflict, occupies the same relation, in the unfolding of the infinite purpose in all our lives, as the monster war occupies upon the pages of history. War is the crowning evil of the ages. It embraces every crime and exalts it into virtue, cruelty, deception, lying, hatred, murder, mutilation, pillage, plunder—yes, the whole catalogue of crime, with exceptions sufficient only to prove the rule. There is nothing inhuman, nothing base, nothing diabolic, that is not included in the term, when we say war. And yet that very thing, the compend of all iniquity, the congeries of all cruelty, is the great disinfectant, the perpetual purifier, of the ages. War, the sum of all iniquity, has been the agent of all

progress, the herald of all ennoblement, the security of all attainment, in the advancement of the nations, in the uplift of mankind. The wars of Canaan, the most merciless, the most inhuman, the most barbarous of history, were the plowshare and the harrow that prepared fair Palestine for her mission among the nations, and fitted that sacred soil for its spiritual harvest for mankind. Alexander the Great, carrying slaughter and destruction into Persia and India and the remotest Orient, carried with them the arts and the culture of Greece in her peerless prime. The phalanxes of Cæsar, sweeping the valleys and hillsides of Hispania and Gaul and far off Britain, devastating their fair fields, disseminated the seeds of regularity and system and law that are the basis and the superstructure of the jurisprudence of our modern time, the gift of Roman valor and Roman arms to the civilization of our later day. The crusades, bloody and relentless, were the predecessors of the Reformation, and crowned their scenes of carnage with the standard of the cross. The wars with the Indians, on our own soil, characterized by injustice so cruel, and by trickery and fraud so inhuman, cleared a Continent for civilization, and exterminated the red man who wasted its vast acres that the way might be opened for a race worthy of the hidden wealth of its mines, and the boundless fertility of its fields. It was the survival of the fittest, on a continental scale. Our Revolutionary war made us a nation and constituted us a free people. Our civil war purged us of our national disgrace, clarified the atmosphere of

our national life, and put an end forever to our crowning crime. The war with Spain has dashed to the earth the yoke of most cruel bondage, and burst the chains of the most merciless inhumanity ever placed upon the shoulders and the wrists of men. War, the culmination of humanity, has been the fountain of blessing to mankind. War, the sum of iniquity, has been the disseminator of purity and enlightenment and progress and peace.

And war, in the realm of spirit, occupies the same position, and stands in the same relation. Trial, I mean, in all its forms, this great conflict of soul. It is a necessity in the inmost nature of things, in the plan of God, in the constitution of the universe. Not a battle would have been fought on this earth of ours, if battle were not ultimately a blessing. Not a trial would have been borne in one heart of ours, if trial were not unqualifiedly a boon. That is, if there is a good God, and a strong One, ruling this universe. If there is One who loves; and One who can exercise His love, without limitation or restraint. It goes without saying that if there is some power in this universe mightier than God, then, however good He is, and however loving, all our reasoning falls to the ground, and anything may happen however fatal, however cataclysmic. But so long as we can say that He that is for us is greater than they that be against us, we can say: "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations," meaning, as James did, temptations to the worst, that is, temptations to all evil, and, last and lowest of all, to sin.

The alabaster box poured forth its fragrance, when it was broken at our Saviour's feet. The human heart sends up to the skies its aroma of holiest devotion, when it can be said :

"A broken and emptied vessel
For the Master's use made meet ;
Emptied that He may fill me
As forth to His service I go :
Broken, that so unhindered
His grace through me might flow."

The thoughts that are now upon our minds are fraught with practical issues that are alike immediate and vital in every human life. We are seldom exempt from trial in some form that seems severe and hard to us, and that, therefore, involves the ever present mystery, Why, if there is a good God in this universe, and a powerful God, One who is willing and One who is able to order otherwise, why it should be so. Some of us who seem to have the least and the fewest sorrows in life have the severest and the most. Some of our hearts that seem happiest are most broken with great grief.

We owe some of these burdens, that seem perhaps heavier than we can bear, to heredity. They have come down to us from our fathers and mothers. They are a terrible and a tyrannous inheritance from a dark past. Others are the product of our mistakes—mistakes it is impossible now to correct, for which there is no room for repentance, though we seek it carefully and with tears. Many of our trials are the direct consequences of our sins. Because we have done wrong, we suffer. The nails may be ex-

tracted from the board of life's transgressions, but the holes remain. Then we suffer many of the hardest blows, and carry many of the heaviest weights in life, on account of our environment. Because we are hedged in by the customs of society, by the injustices of popular opinion, by circumstances wholly beyond our control. Whether from one or all these causes, our trials, thus necessitated and coming in upon us sometimes like a flood, when "the waves and the billows are gone over our head," seem to us a sad and a terrible and a revolting thing. As the author of Hebrews said: "No trial for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous." That is the fact of human life. As universal as man. As age, long as the centuries. Put over against that fact, therefore, as the supreme lesson of our theme, that what seems to us so horrible, and so revolting, is a blessed and a beatific thing. Whether by heredity, or along the pathway of our mistakes or our sins, or within the adamantine walls of inevitable environment, we have come into our experience of trial or calamity, of suffering or sorrow, of agony or distress, "Count it all joy," "Count it all joy." It is infinitely better, or it would not be so.

And I think the strongest conceivable proof of this proposition is to be found in the two concrete cases so prominent in Scripture. They are the contrasted cases of Abraham and Solomon. They present the two sides of this question. In the life of the one, trial wrought its perfect work. In the life of the other, the absence of trial developed its indescribable bane. Abraham

was specifically called of God to endure a trial that had no possible end in view, but the effect upon his own nature. A conscientious Christian man over in Connecticut a few years ago passed through the same experience, believed that God commanded him to put his child to death, and society and human law said he must be proved insane or die on the gallows. Abraham, if he had carried out his purpose, would have been sent to an asylum, or he would have been electrocuted, in this year 1899. God commanded him to offer up Isaac, his only son Isaac, on one of the mountains that He should tell him of. Abraham, familiar with the system of human sacrifices so general in his day, did not think to comply with the divine command by presenting his son Isaac on Mt. Moriah wholly and forever to God, by some spiritual rite, but, in his ignorance and the barbarism of his time, Abraham thought that the only way to give Isaac was to kill him. It was the sorest, heaviest trial that could possibly be sent into his life. And it was sent for no other purpose and for no other end, but for its effect upon himself, for what it would do for him. God tested Abraham. Abraham measured up to the test. He gave his son. He slew him, in the inmost purpose and intent of that terrific hour, when that knife was lifted, and would have fallen, had not God held it back. And that trial *made* Abraham. It placed him on the double based pinnacle, where no other child of man ever stood—"the father of the faithful," "the friend of God." Of all the tried and true, that

man on Moriah is the father. Of only that man on Moriah has it been said that, in his familiarity and intimate converse, he was "the friend of God." We are reading the most wonderful page in the biography of the ages. It is a page written in the blood red colors of sorest anguish, intensest grief, bitterest tears. Abraham looks back, and will forever, to that mountain, and "counts it all joy."

Then just as vividly, in just as distinct and clear cut colors, we may see the other side. We have before us, now, one of the noblest, best natures, in youth and rising manhood, the world ever saw. So peerless in his qualities, so matchless in his wisdom, so pure and guileless in his spirit, that when God offered him whatever he might ask, he did not think of wealth, or fame, or pleasure, or the life of his enemies, but only of wisdom, and an understanding heart. That was his character at twenty-one. From that day forth he had everything. He had the wisdom and the discerning judgment for which alone he prayed, and he had unbounded prosperity, exhaustless wealth, limitless pleasure, not a sorrow, nor a heart ache, nor a care, and what was the result at fifty-six? A ruined man, a wreck of what he was thirty-five years before, a sceptic, a profligate, a roué. These are the two pictures. Put them side by side. And, oh, "count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." If there is any gold in the lump of our natures, God will put it in the furnace, and by fierce fires call it forth. If we have no trial, it is because there isn't any gold. But who, who has no

trial? Where is the man or the woman or the child in this presence to-day that is not tried? The world may think you have everything your own way, as absolutely as Solomon. But what a blessed thing it is that it is not so, for then Solomon's doom at fifty-six might be yours. "Every heart knoweth its own bitterness." Every house has its own skeleton. Every soul sees its own sorrow. And out of it comes blessedness, perfection, peace.

If this be so, submission is a very sweet, and a very natural thing. Not the submission of the stoic who defiantly says to the waves and billows, "Come on." But the submissiveness of love, that sees at a glance that it must be better so. Trustfulness flavors the bitterest cup. Trust in the wisdom that fills that cup, trust in the love that puts it to our lips. Triumph is written over every trial, while the trial lasts. Not only when it is over, but while, in all its weight and heaviness, it is now at hand. And this is the supreme victory. This is the Himalayan height. This is our Moriah. The hand of faith is lifted on high though it holds the gleaming knife, and though our Isaac lies before. On that loftiest height the final word is true, that this race of ours that suffers and is tried is raised above the angels who never knew a sorrow and never felt a care. God was not taken by surprise in Eden. A universe will acknowledge that in Paradise.



The Holy Spirit.



THESE MEN ARE FULL OF NEW WINE—*Acts II: 13.*

AT THE time these words were spoken there occurred in the streets of Jerusalem the most inexplicable and the most exciting scene of which, perhaps, those famous streets had ever been witness. There had just poured forth from one of its upper rooms a company of one hundred and twenty men and women, strangely filled with some mysterious power, and endowed with marvelous skill in giving expression to their ecstatic thought. Whatever the dialect of any of the multitude just then thronging the city may happen to be, from whatever land he may have come, and however strange his speech, some one of these one hundred and twenty can talk to him, and tell him, in his “own tongue wherein he was born,” “the wonderful works of God.” As these speakers are dilating in so many tongues, what they have to say seems only jargon to all their listeners, save the few of the particular dialect in which they are addressed. It is as though one hundred and twenty men and women were standing on the corners of our streets this Sunday morning and speaking, in as many languages as there were voices, in animated and excited discourse. If one man was

silenced so summarily, a few weeks ago, what quick disposition would be made were he multiplied by one hundred and twenty! Jerusalem was in tumult. Nobody could understand the strange phenomenon. No philosopher could give an explanation. And the only theory that is placed on record is that of the text: "These men are full of new wine." They are stupidly drunk. This medley of voices on the streets of Jerusalem is the maudlin muttering of gross intoxication.

One of the speakers, in a language they understand, at once denies the charge. He gives two reasons for the denial. The first of them had more force in his day than in ours. It was only nine o'clock in the morning. Men did not, in those days, get drunk so early as that. But the second reason of the repudiation of the charge goes to the core of the subject, and gives the key to the whole mystery. That scene of excitement, so unprecedented and so intense, has its explanation. It has been planned long before in the purpose of the Father, and foretold expressly, so that it is described as His peculiar and prophetic promise—"the promise of the Father." These men are filled, not with new wine, as they have charged, but with the Holy Spirit whom God is now about to "pour upon all flesh." They are not drunk, but Spirit-filled. It is not an attack of intoxication, but the might of the Infinite, that rests upon them, and clothes them with mystic power, and gives them wondrous facility of speech.

Because this is so, the results that day are as mar-

velous as the manner of the men. That Spirit in His power moves not only upon the speakers so matchlessly endowed, but upon the throng who listened and, before the night has fallen, the number of believers is multiplied into thousands, and embraces those of every nationality and of every tongue. Never such a day dawned on Jerusalem. Never a night, after such a day, gathered over that city. Three thousand more believers when that sun went down than when that day began! A fire kindled that should flame forth from that city and some day, with heaven's light and life and love, ignite the world! Pentecost! How it almost seems to sound of the majesty and the might and the resistlessness of the Spirit of the Lord! Good Friday, the world's midnight. Pentecost, its everlasting dawn.

The Person who wrought so wondrously that day, is that Person of the Deity who applies to all believers the resources of the Infinite, who imparts God to man. God the Father gives Himself; God the Son embodies the gift; God the Spirit applies the gift to all souls. He who "brooded over the waters" when the world was made, has been brooding ever since, calling forth all that is highest and noblest and best in humanity—the life-giving force in the eternal moral creation of God.

Let me read you a parable that I discovered in some periodical not long ago.

A Great Sculptor made a beautiful Image in clay. And when it was finished, Necessity pressed upon it

and Toil bent it down. Famine pinched it and Tyranny hammered it and Monopoly cast it out from the place which the Sculptor had ordained.

It lay in the kennel, rejected and unclean. Theology passed by on the other side and said, "See how depraved it is,—it is fit only to be cast into the fire."

But Love lifted the figure up and wept over it; and, as her tears fell upon the clay, it softened in her arms, so that she smoothed out the bruises with her hands.

Then Justice set it again in its place and men said, "Behold, it was made in the image of God!"

Put for "Justice," in this parable, God the Holy Spirit, and you have the office and the work of Him who, at Pentecost, came with "the sound as of a rushing mighty wind" and rested as "with cloven tongues of fire" upon each of the disciples. Every pure thought, every right desire, every noble aspiration, every ardent breathing of a human soul after God, is the implantation of the divine Spirit. Each is the product of His influence. Each alike is the resultant of His presence, and the fruitage of His power.

The "dispensation of the Spirit" is as eternal as Himself. Before time began, while immortality shall last, that Spirit is ever at work upon the hearts and minds of men, actuating all that is good, antagonizing all that is evil. It is the eternal now, in which God moves upon the thoughts and inspires the activities, and uplifts the souls of men—God, by His Spirit, in ever present contact with humanity. The Holy Spirit's dispensation began when man was made, and continues while man shall exist, in any

world, in any age. Only eternity can circumscribe God. All the ages are the arena of His ever present Spirit. He who dwells in us, to incite to all that is good, to turn from all that is evil, has been doing the same thing since Adam and Eve repented of Eden's sin, and did what they could to repair the wreck they had together made of humanity. The same Spirit who inspired that pure thought or purpose that came to you or me just now, perhaps, as though out of the infinite spaces, inspired that walk which Enoch took with God more than four thousand years ago. He put into the bosom of Abraham that resistless faith. He created that magnificent specimen of manhood that was Egypt's pride and Pharaoh's delight. He equipped the immortal leader of Israel for his great life work. He was stirring the hearts of the people when they brought their offerings so generously, and so enthusiastically, in the wilderness, that Moses had to beseech them to refrain from giving. He filled with His presence the heroes of that far off time, whose names are held in highest honor as the author of Hebrews calls the roll: "What shall I more say? for the time will fail me if I tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and of Jephthah; of David and Samuel and the prophets." That mysterious character among them, the giant of the flowing locks, comes down to us with an explanation of the mystery of his wondrous strength in the statement of the inspired historian, that, when those deeds so marvelous were wrought by his hands, "the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon

him." It was the power of that Spirit that clothed the weak and sensual and selfish Samson, and made him an avenger against Israel, and an instrument of the overwhelming judgments of the Lord. His hair was the symbol and the seal of the Spirit's power, and when that was gone the Spirit was gone, and he was a helpless child in the hands of his enemies, and the giant of Zorah was divested of his strength.

In that long period of national decline and exile, save in the message of the prophets, and their warning voice, few hearts were open to the influence of the Spirit, and His presence was almost a thing unknown. When the captives return and the walls of the ruined city are rebuilt, then His presence is manifest once more, and all the people have a mind to work. The Spirit was the Creator of that willing mind, the Maker of those glowing, earnest hearts. Another long night intervened between the last of the Old Testament prophets, and the coming of the messenger of the Lord. It was the night again, because so few hearts were open, and so few lives receptive of the Spirit of the Lord. When John the Baptist lifted up his voice on Jordan's banks, the word of the angel of the Lord foretelling his birth found fulfillment: "He shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb." When our divine Master enters upon his mission, and assumes His life work, the Spirit, in the form of a dove, descends and rests upon Him. His human nature opens to the full and complete possession.

At this point, a strange and inexplicable circum-

stance occurs. During the earthly life of Jesus, when the Spirit was dwelling in Him, that Spirit seems to have been limited, in a degree, by that bodily presence of the Master. Not only was that Master confined by the flesh, but the Spirit also seemed to submit to the same limitation, and there were few exhibitions, during those three years, save within the boundaries of that wonderful life and its immediate reach, of the presence and power of the Spirit. The Master expressly says to His disciples, who, if any of the sons of men, should have enjoyed the Spirit's power, in such immediate contact and converse with their Lord: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you." The presence of the Spirit was thus conditioned absolutely upon the bodily departure and absence of our Lord. It looks as though, while the Master was in the flesh, the Spirit, as I have just said, shared his physical limitations, and was confined to the material presence. In harmony with this theory, the especial promise of the Master upon His departure, is the return of His Spirit, the presence of the Comforter, the might and power of the Holy Ghost. This is the promise of the Father that He makes so emphatic, and that He extends to that immediate circle of His disciples, in the midnight of their despair, to be the sunshine of their hope. That promise was fulfilled when the sound "as of a rushing mighty wind" was heard, and when the "cloven tongues as of fire sat upon each of them." The breath of the

Almighty was wafted earthward. All tongues were loosed, that every soul might speak and hear the wonderful works of God.

And so that day of Pentecost has never ceased; its sun has never set. From that hour until this, and on unto the consummation of the age, the word of the Master finds fulfillment, and the Spirit has come who shall abide with us for ever. His mission, upon which He has entered, is outlined in those last words of Jesus, as He was so soon to go away. When our minds are open, and our natures receptive, He, as the Master said, "teaches us all things; leads us into all truth; brings all things to our remembrance, whatsoever he has said unto us." This is the work of the Spirit of God down through the ages. Pentecost was its concentration, in mightiest symbolism. Pentecost, with its "rushing, mighty wind" and with its "cloven tongues of fire," pictured on the canvass of a day the reality of all time. This breath of the Almighty is the atmosphere in which all pure thoughts are conceived, all noble purposes inborn, all worthy deeds committed. The cloven tongues are the final answer to that prayer of the psalmist, "Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise." It was a great day in Jerusalem, because so many hearts and minds were open to the incoming of the Lord.

The results of every day are hinged upon this alone condition. To what degree are we open to the inflow and the indwelling of the Spirit of God? In the presence of that question, Pentecost may be as

permanent as we please, and the wind may blow with infinite blessing, and the tongues be loosed to tell the old, old story with a pathos that is ever new, and a power that is puissant with the might of the Most High. Just here the secrets of all spiritual experience lie open. Here is the celestial rule of three. As is the presence of the Spirit Who came on Pentecost to the degree of openness of a human soul, so are the anticipations of blessing to the results that are wrought by the mighty power of God. You may have two needles in your hand, in appearance and size alike. And yet one of those needles may be a magnet that draws the particles of iron irresistibly to itself. The other may possess no magnetism. One of them has been charged. Two men or two women, so far as the world can see, are of equal qualifications, of equal capacities, of identical powers. The one draws, with the resistless power of love, all hearts to God. The other has no magnetism. The one has been charged. That soul opened, in some glad hour, to the approaching Spirit, and the electric force was given, and a new life was begun.

You know the Mohammedans believe that the prophet of Mecca was the Holy Ghost. In his person the promise of the Comforter found fulfillment. That sounds very much like blasphemy, like the sin against the Holy Ghost for which "there is no forgiveness." I wonder if that is the reason of the curse that rests upon Mohammedanism, the blight that descends as a pall upon the nations wherever the

crescent may go. But there is a truth back of the error, though the error be so gross and so revolting. The revivalist, Gardiner, used to speak of those who were filled with enthusiasm and zeal in Christian work as Holy Ghost men and Holy Ghost women. The language was coarse, but the idea was scriptural. "Full of the Holy Ghost" is a Bible phrase. It suggests the supreme height to which humanity aspires. Jesus stood on the summit, and so it could be said of Him, as of no other man, that He was "full of the Holy Spirit." John the Baptist climbed nearest Him, and so it was said that he was greater because higher up than all that were ever born of women. The one hundred and twenty were full of the Holy Ghost, and what a day that was!

My dear friends, I would that you and I might be so open to the Spirit of God, so moved upon by His resistless power, that the old charge against the disciples might be revived and that the world might think that we were drunk. I do not think there is any danger. I would there were. And then I would that some angel voice, like Peter's of old, might say: "'Men and brethren these are not drunken as ye suppose!' but the Holy Spirit rests upon them, and they are full of love and life and light. They have tasted the new wine of the kingdom. A new day has dawned. A new era has struck." All hail the beatific intoxication!

Praying, and Making Prayers.

AND MAKE PRAYERS.—*Luke V, 33.*

PRAYING and making a prayer are two very different things. Making a prayer is machinery. Praying is laying hold on God. They who make prayers are on the edges. They who pray are in the inner courts, and stand within the holy of holies. The two things, therefore, suggest at once the two great types of religion—that which is on the outside and that which is within; that which floats like waves upon the surface and that which moves like the deep gulf stream far down beneath. Before the establishment of our National banking system, when bills were issued by the corporations authorized by State laws, every merchant was supplied with a pamphlet describing the appearance of the counterfeit issues, and suggesting the method of their detection. The ingenuity of the counterfeiter was so great, and the field of his manipulations so vast, under that system, that every man must be a student along that particular line, and each mercantile house

a kind of committee of investigation. There was so much of the counterfeit passing from hand to hand as well as the genuine issue of responsible and reliable banks. So, it seems to me, is the need in the circulation of the currency of the kingdom in these times of ours. There is so much of the counterfeit passing around, mixed with the genuine coin of the realm. No National banking system, issuing one kind of incorruptible currency, has yet been established in the realm of morals. From irresponsible sources so much is floated on the ethical market that every christian must needs resolve himself into an examining committee of one, and will require special qualifications and constant helps to a skillful and wise detection. It is to this necessity that the Master points, when He says: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

We have, then, as suggested by this phrase of our text, the two types of religion—the counterfeit and the genuine coin—the artificial and the real. We have been reading a great deal about "realism in romance." The object of Churches and Y. M. C. As. and W. C. T. Us. and Y. P. S. C. Es., of all voluntary organizations of christian effort alike, is to discover, and bring into active operation, realism in religion. A Pilate and a David wash their hands in proffered innocence. A publican and a Pharisee alike go up, with devout demeanor, to the house of God. Satan quotes scripture as readily as the saints. An Anna and a Jezebel both keep fasts. Devils believe as confidently as the humblest disciples of our Lord. The one believes and trembles, the other believes and

loves. As to their orthodoxy, they are on a level.

We are looking, therefore, for some means of detection—some sifting process—by which the artificial may be separated from the real, and the false from the true. In this search of the hour, we may find assistance as we observe the contrasts that surrounded the inquiry of our text. The disciples are a good deal puzzled over the difference that they very plainly see exists between the religion in which the Master is educating them, and up to the exalted plane of which He proposes to lead them, and the religion of the disciples of John and the Pharisees—who “fast often and make prayers.” In no little anxiety and perturbation of mind, they are asking the Master about it. The problem that gives them so much trouble is the problem of every age. Why this difference? Why these two things always commingled in human life? The artificial and the real. The counterfeit and the true.

The question is a deep one. The philosophy of it is among the mysteries of the kingdom. The fact is palpable, and its universality, in the present order of things, is not a question of dispute.

Let us look at the distinguishing marks upon these two kinds of coin. Let us observe the differences whereby we may detect the false and discover the true, and tell at once the artificial and the real. Over against the system of religion of the Christ, those disciples, in their inquiry, place two systems, that of the disciples of John the Baptist and that of the Pharisees. The system of John the Baptist, when he gave it,

was all right. It had the true ring. It was the genuine coin, bearing the stamp of the kingdom. It solidified on this central principle—repentance for the remission of sins. It needed only the copestone of faith. One touch of the Master's hand, and the building would be complete. But the disciples of John, when John was put in prison, took lesson of the Pharisees, and ran the system of their imprisoned leader in the same groove. And so they are classified together, and there were not three types of religion in their catalogue, but two only. The two were distinguished both by their inherent qualities, and by the object they had in view. By what they were, and by what they proposed to accomplish in the hearts and lives of men.

They were contrasted in their controlling qualities. The one contained a series of ceremonies and forms that were to be observed for their own sake. The ceremonies and the forms ends in themselves. To "fast often" and to "make prayers" was of the essence of religion. The observation of ceremony, fidelity to form, these were the fundamentals. To make clean the outside of the cup was a finality. To whiten a sepulchre was to disinfect the corruption that was inside of it. Ceremony and form for their own sake. That was the first step.

Then there was a thoroughly hide bound ecclesiasticism. They claimed the regular organization from Abraham down. Voluntary associations for religious work would find in Phariseeism a cold day. Everything was subordinated to keeping up the regular order, and all that came in the way of religious

ministrations must come by that channel. It was, as before, the outward and the material for their own sake. Ecclesiastical order took precedence over the salvation of souls. First regularity, then better men and women.

And, in the same spirit, this system, distinguished by the disciples from the system of the Christ, set sound theology above saving faith. They cared vastly more that men should think as they did, than that they should do every time the right thing. They were more concerned for their philosophy than for their faith. For what they believed than for how they behaved.

These, then, were the characteristics of the system as a system—form and ceremony for their own sake, ecclesiastical order as a finality, soundness of doctrine as of the essence and substance of religion.

Opposed to these controlling characteristics that mark the counterfeit coin we may trace the qualities of the authorized currency of the realm. Now we have the form and the ceremony as instrumentalities to the end beyond—no longer as the essence of, but as helps to, devotion. The stately and cultured liturgy now ministers to reverence and thoughtfulness in prayer. The beauties of art inspire to the higher beauty of holiness. The melody of music and of song become the refrain of the higher harmonies of spirit, where the uplift of the soul is in sweet attune with its God. The evil is not in the form but in the purpose for which the form is used. This differentiates the artificial from the real, the false from the true.

We trace the same distinction as to the attitude of the church as an outward and visible organization. It is no longer a finality—the ultimatum of the soul within. We are not now made religious by being members of the church, but we are made members of the church by being religious. These are two opposite and contradictory things. The church is important as an instrumentality, as a means, but no longer vital as an end. It is not a palace of perfected saints, but a hospital of imperfect sinners. It is not a conservatory where every plant is in luxuriant bloom, but a garden where every germ is growing and will blossom, if not now, then by and bye. Its regulations and laws are not an alphabet displayed for the beauty of the letters, the symmetry and grace of their form, but a very plain alphabet with which we may spell the final word L-O-V-E.

A sound theology is still important. Knowledge, accurate and clear, is helpful to all that is highest and best, but it is not the essential, the decisive thing. As with regard to church membership, we may repeat the principle, men are not religious because they are orthodox, but they are orthodox because they are religious. The more truth the better everywhere in every relation of life, only this is to be remembered, that truth in the heart immeasurably outweighs, in the scales of the eternities, truth in the head. The great Napoleon was an excellent theologian. This is said to have been his confession of faith: "My religion is very simple. I look at this universe, so vast, so complex, so magnificent, and I say to myself that it can-

not be the result of chance, but the work, however intended, of an unknown, omnipotent Being, as superior to man as the universe is superior to the finest machines of human invention." A faultless theology. What was the matter of it? It was theory in exile at St. Helena. Not practice on the plains of Austerlitz and Waterloo.

The posture of all true religion is this: Get all the truth you can. Think as unerringly. Believe as correctly. And then put truth into your life. Live your orthodoxy. Make your theology a vital, ever-present force in society, and a motive power in human affairs.

We thus distinguish these two types of religion, these contradictory systems, by what they are.

Let us still further follow the line of cleavage as we recall the wholly different objects, for the attainment of which, under these opposite systems, men and women are religious. The artificial and the counterfeit is employed, always, for the purpose of covering up something. The genuine and the real, for letting out the best that is in us, and giving it ample play. When a man resorts to the one he has something he wants to hide. He wants to serve the devil in some way, and he "steals the livery of heaven" that he may render the service more gracefully. Perhaps he is very worldly and absorbed in the pleasures of the world. He wants to conceal this with the garb of religion, "That he may appear unto men to fast." He may have some darling ambition. It may seem surer of attainment if he passes in society for a

churchman. And so he puts on the cloak. Or he may have been guilty of some heinous crime. Though the law and the courts never got hold of him, perhaps he is an escaped convict from the penitentiary of conscience, and he fears everybody will see the brand upon his soul. He seeks a hiding place in religious observances and church going, so that he may look a little better, and, in his own sight, perhaps, appear a little cleaner.

This was the motive, clear as daylight, down in the heart of those old Pharisees. They were abominable rascals, and they knew it. He who was mild of manner and gentle of speech, said they were a "generation of vipers," and the snake element was forever manifesting itself. But they thought they could hide away all this vileness and get the viper out of sight. That they, whose father was the devil, could pass for those whose father was God—"God is our Father." The Saviour simply stripped off this garment, and showed them to the world just as they were. They have appeared ever since in their true colors, and have come down in history the representative hypocrites of the ages.

True religion has nothing to cover, nothing to conceal. It has no skeleton for which a closet must be prepared in the enclosure of the soul. No stolen goods for which it would construct a safety vault. No vices it would varnish, no spots it needs to disguise. It becomes religious not that it may cover itself up, but that, in offering and sacrifice, it may let itself out. No longer concealment, but expression.

Not hiding away, but coming out into the sunshine.

And then, there is the additional contrast in this, that the artificial and the false centres in selfish enjoyment and aspiration; the honest and the true goes forth in purest service to humanity. The one is religious because it loves itself. The other because it loves its fellow and its God. The aim of the one is to get the soul through. It is a kind of ticket, issued professedly for a passage to the skies. It is religious for the sake of getting to heaven. The other would make a heaven down here. Keeping itself pure and doing good to men.

The extraordinary judicial qualities of the peerless king in Jerusalem, tradition tells us, were once tested in this way. Two large clusters of flowers, the one artificial and the other real, were held before him at the opposite end of the room, and the king was to decide as to the fact. "Open the windows," said Solomon, "and let in the bees." The clusters of flowers of these two types of religion lie before us. How shall we distinguish them? Let in the bees of daily duty, of humblest toil, of lowliest service. It wont take them long to find the honey.

Mahmoud, the conqueror of India, found at Somnat a great idol, and cried to his followers: "Destroy it." The Brahmins fell before him, pleading: "Spare our god Somnat, and we will give thee gold, pearls and jewels of rarest lustre." The command was given again, "Destroy it," and with the blow there flowed forth from within it pearls, jewels and choicest gold, a hundred fold more than the ransom terri-

fied Brahmins had proposed. True religion smites the image of worldliness and sin, and dashes it to the earth. It finds "manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting."

As we draw this contrast to day, do we not feel like sitting down with ourselves and asking, at the door of our own hearts, "which of these two kinds of religion have we got?" In the commerce of the eternities, are we circulating the counterfeit or the genuine coin? Are we religious for the sake of happiness, or are we happy because we are religious? Are we church members to cover up something and, if possible, slide in at last? Or is religion the atmosphere of our soul, the vital air of spirit, heaven begun below?

One More Appeal to Men.

AND I SOUGHT FOR A MAN AMONG THEM, THAT
SHOULD MAKE UP THE HEDGE, AND STAND IN THE
GAP BEFORE ME FOR THE LAND, THAT I SHOULD
NOT DESTROY IT, BUT I FOUND NONE.—*Ezek.*
XXII, 30.

THE DESIRE to present to any of my non-church-going friends, more especially of my own sex, who, in response to my invitation, may be present to-day, a wholly unimpassioned and emotionless argument. I shall aim to address you as though I were arguing a case before a judge rather than before a jury. Where all appeal to sentiment shall be in abeyance, and only the cold logic of the case shall be the subject of consideration and thought.

I desire also, in this argument, to-day, to eliminate the preacher from the problem, his interests or happiness, however intimately they may be involved. I have many times made to you an appeal from that standpoint. You know already, just as well as I, what a source of regret, and of anxiety as well, your absence from the sanctuary always must be to the preacher. Not only on your own account, but also on his own. The inference he cannot avoid must be that his preaching is not sufficiently interesting to

render your attendance upon it a pleasure. That goes without saying. Dismissing, therefore, altogether, the personal wishes and interests of the preacher, and avoiding all questions of religious sentiment and spiritual emotion, I propose to present to you to-day an argument based, as I believe, upon principles that you will not call in question, and that, if you will consent to give them your candid and careful attention, may induce your conscience to a change, and may lead you, as honorable and manly men, to what I believe you will see to be the only honorable and manly thing.

My first proposition then is that you will accept as fundamental to all true religion, to all happy relations between man and man, the principle that you should always "put yourself in his place," whose interests you are considering, and your relations to whom are the present question of morals. You will come to a right conclusion just so far as you do this one thing—put yourself in his place. Confucius, the old Chinese philosopher, some four hundred years, I believe, before Christ, put this principle in these words: "Whatsoever ye would not that men should do to you, do ye not to them." A wiser Philosopher, four hundred years after, lifted that principle to a still higher plane, put it in the affirmative form, and, sweeping the whole range of morals, said: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so unto them." "Put yourself in his place."

I am sure, at the outset of this argument, that you

will not demur to this proposition, that this is the fundamental principle of all our relations with men in society, and in the daily intercourse of life. I am sure that you are making it your aim to live in harmony with this principle, and that you hope sincerely to embody it, as a controlling influence, in your character and conduct. You expect other men to live in obedience to it, and, as a mere matter of justice and equity, you intend to do it yourself. No appeal from me is necessary to urge the principle. It would be wholly out of place for me to advise its acceptance. You have accepted it already at the bar of conscience, and you recognize its imperative and its imperial and imperious demands. You are endeavoring to bow to them, as an upright, good man, in business, in society, and in the affairs of every day. You are, in each new relation into which you may be brought, and at each new point of contact with your fellow men, asking the question, What would I have them do to me? and you are, so far as you are true to your own purpose, and honest with yourself, doing that to them. This is wholly apart from any spiritual or religious considerations. You may be wholly uninterested in these. You may have dismissed them altogether, from your thought. "Business is business," and you have cared for no separate or higher plane. But, on that plane, you have long ago concluded that the best way to work out the problem of life is to do it on this basis, and to conduct your business, and to direct your affairs, on this principle that, if

you do not attempt to do unto men as you would have them do unto you, they will not make any attempt to do it, and everything will be at sixes and sevens. Down, therefore, on the material plane of business interests, of pacific relations in society, and the bare necessity of getting along as well as we can with men, you accept this principle, and you recognize the propriety of putting yourself in his place. That is my first proposition.

Secondly, I am alike sure that you desire the continuance, in your community, and in every community of men, of the Christian church as an outward and visible organization. You desire this just as sincerely and just as heartily as any who are contributing their part to its continued existence, and, by their habitual presence, are doing their share to preserve it from ultimate extinction. You may have no interest whatever in denominational issues. You may not care whether the church, as an institution in society, is Episcopalian, or Baptist, or Methodist, or Presbyterian. Indeed, you may be wholly indifferent whether it is Romanist or Protestant. But you want the church, in some form, to continue, just as much as the most persistent church goer in this town. You know very well, without my saying it, that your factory would not be safe, your business would be fatally imperilled, your store, and your ware room, and your office, and your house, would be at the mercy of a mob, if there were no church in Sandy Hill. You wouldn't have the church go out of existence for anything in the world. You

think it is a good thing. You consider it a safeguard to society, a protection to property, and a helpful factor in restraining men and women from criminal courses, in discouraging them from general meanness, and from many perverse and abominable things. You may have a very unfavorable opinion of some church members in the concrete, you may have had some very unsatisfactory experiences with them, and you may have found them very unreliable and slippery, but that does not go to the heart of the question, and the church, in the abstract, has your unqualified and loyal support. Very probably you give a great deal of money to its material support, and assist very generously to pay its bills, to liquidate its mortgages, and to meet its ever recurring obligations. All this is because you want the church to keep on, and hope for its continued existence as a beneficial institution in society, and an excellent hospital for the morally sick and wounded, while you who are so well have no need of its ministration. As a moral force, you believe in it just as sincerely as I, or any of your neighbors. This is my second proposition.

Thirdly, you are aware that there is a considerable portion of this community, as of the communities around and beyond us, who, by their habitual presence and co-operation, are contributing their full share to the sustentation and continuance of the Christian church, as an outward and visible organization.

This portion consists largely, it is true, of women.

The fact is easily accounted for on two grounds. First, women are generally better than men, and more inclined to the highest and best things. They are more elevated in their instincts, and more spiritual in their frame. And, secondly, whenever any good work is undertaken, whenever any movement of reform is inaugurated, any measure for the benefit or amelioration of mankind, women, as a natural thing, are in the majority. There are a great many excellent women in the W. C. T. U. And a great company of others who, while not enrolled in its membership, are in heartiest sympathy, and most constant co-operation, with its activities and aims. An M. C. T. U. has not yet been proposed, so far as I am aware. The contrast is significant. In the most vital reform of the age women are far on in the van. Men have not started. And so it is a wholly congruous circumstance that, in this portion of society that are actively sustaining the Christian church, there is a large preponderance of women. But with the gallant and noble women there is a goodly band of excellent and exemplary men, who stand high in the community, who are among its most intelligent, influential and honored members. Active and earnest and faithful, as they are, in every good word and work, they are the pillars of the church, and they are consecrating their best energies and powers to its preservation and perpetuity. And you, I may be permitted to say, with all your heart, honor and love them for it.

Now this portion of the community of which I

speak, is sustaining the church, as an outward and visible institution, many times at great self-sacrifice, and often at severe cost. The preaching to which they listen is sometimes very poor. The music, sometimes, grates like jargon on their ears. Sometimes, on Sunday morning, after a hard and laborious week, they are very tired and seem to need a rest, of which they have been deprived. Sometimes they would like very much a day of recreation; a ride perhaps on their wheel into the country, or a quiet sojourn in some retreat among the hills or mountains, or along the lake shore, or the sea side. But, notwithstanding all these, there they are, in their places, as regular as the ticking of the clock, by their presence sustaining, and by their active co-operation upholding, the appointed service of the house of God. They are, to the utmost of their influence, contributing to the continued existence of the Christian church.

Now the one thing, more than any other, that impedes their work; the one thing, more than any other, that threatens it with defeat, and that threatens the church they are endeavoring to sustain with extinction, is the absence of so many intelligent, cultured, upright, manly men from the service of the sanctuary, where the vacant spaces protest against the gross incongruity, and cry out against the great injustice. Your absence, my brother men, is the clog on the wheel, the ball and chain at their feet, the high wall close up against them that they are powerless to surmount. If they fail to uphold the church, if they do not succeed in their self-sacrificing, noble

work, the crime against humanity and against God will be laid at your door. Put yourself, therefore, in their place. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do you even so unto them." Suppose that you were engaged, with all your heart, in that great, good work. And suppose that they were the great impediment in your path, the one great hindrance in your way. What would you want them to do? Do that. The preaching to which you listen may not measure up to the high standard of intellectuality and spiritual grasp that your mental make-up seems to require. Perhaps it would not, if you did the preaching yourself. The music may not meet the requirements of your cultivated and exacting taste. Perhaps it would not, were you the player or the singer. You may be very tired with a hard week's work. You may very much prefer, many times, a day's recreation and fun, to an hour and a half's duty, and a personal obligation equitably and fairly discharged. But this is the argument. Your fundamental principle of morals, by which you are purposing to mould your life, is embodied in that maxim you unqualifiedly and heartily accept, to do as you would be done by. Your neighbors, by their presence and co-operation, are continuing the existence in our town of the Christian church. Its existence you believe to be vital to the best interests of the community, to the safety of society, and to the permanence of our free institutions. Your habitual absence is the great danger that hangs over them. If you were doing

this thing you would want them to dissipate that cloud, and turn in and help you before the whole project proved a failure, and everything went to pieces in your hands. On your own principle of morals, I rest my argument.

And then I take that fundamental principle of yours, to which you will not prove disloyal, and I carry it another step. I make a still closer and more direct application. However important you may regard your business interests, as they are to-day reposed in your hands, your factory, or your store, or your office, or your farm, you know, down in your heart, that more important than all these is the existence of the Christian church, and that, whether you act upon the theory or not, the Kingdom of God is primal, and is ever the first thing to be sought. Now let us come down to the inferior plane of your business, or financial, interests, your factory, or store, or office, or farm. These that are of far less importance than the interests that are at stake in the preservation and permanence of the Christian church, as I am sure you will be frank to admit. Now suppose that by sitting one hour and a half each week in your factory, or store, or office, or on your farm, these church goers, however unpleasant it might be to them to do it, and however much they might prefer to do something else, suppose that by sitting there they could further the interests of your business, and promote the success of your factory, or store, or office, or farm, and suppose they wouldn't do it, what would you think of them?

And what would you think of their conduct? What would you think of them and of their conduct in this inferior realm, this lower sphere, of material and perishable things? The realm of financial interests, the sphere of business success? How unkind, how thoughtless, how inconsiderate would these church goers be, if they would not devote one hour and a half out of 168 to help along your business, and insure your financial success! Put yourself in their place. Do as you would be done by. In the higher realm of the enduring and the permanent, in the sphere of immortal interests and the true riches, in comparison with which the success of factories and stores and offices and farms you yourself believe all fade away, these church goers are upholding the pillars of society; they are holding back the flood gates of immorality and crime; they are consecrating their best energies and powers to the preservation and the perpetuation of that one institution ordained of God to protect communities from chaos, and society from dissolution. If you would expect that hour and a half from them if it aided your business, and insured your greater financial success, will you not accept the full force of the argument and, where interests are vitally more important to them and to you and to the world, will you not give them the hour and a half that will change discouragement into elation, and that will convert those vacant spaces that threaten extinction into occupied pews, whose occupants are, at whatever sacrifice or cost, and however unpleasant it may sometimes be, and

however more pleasant some other thing might be in its stead, whose occupants are putting themselves in the place of those whose claims they had forgotten, for a time, and are doing unto them as they would that they should do in return?

The condition, and not the theory, we to-day confront is a serious one. It is not so desperate as in the days of Ezekiel. The text says that he "sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before (him) for the land, that (God) should not destroy it; but (he) *found none.*" To-day, as I have said, associated with the worthy and excellent women, there is a noble company of men who are helping them to "make up the hedge and stand in the gap." But there are others. To these I present the argument I have endeavored to weave out of the warp and woof of logic and of fact, without an ornamental thread of sentiment or fancy. As I said, at the outset of the discussion, I make my argument as in the presence of a judge sitting on the bench. It is wholly unimpassioned, and free from personalities and pathetic appeal. It is a question wholly of equity and justice. It pertains to fundamental morals. My non-church going friends, whom I make my judges this day, will you not take this argument, and, if its successive links hold together, if it warrants, by rigid logic, the conclusion it presents, will you not give your decision with judicial impartiality, and, in accordance with that decision, determine the action of the court?

....Foreign Missions....

I WAS IN PRISON AND YE CAME UNTO ME.—*Matt.*
XXV, 36.

THE impressiveness of our Master's word, in His picture of the ever present judgment, consists in His identification of Himself with the least and the lowest of those of whom He speaks. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." He and the hungry are one personality. "I was hungry." He and the thirsty are an identity. "I was thirsty." And so each of the suffering, and the distressed he carries upon His infinite heart. Each one is Himself. What we do to each we do to Him. This is the supreme finality. This is essential judgment. The "judgment seat of Christ," of which Paul speaks, before which we must all appear, is this identification of Master and disciple—this oneness of every soul we touch with its Lord. We shall receive, every man, "the deeds done in the body," because these deeds are done, every one, to the Lord Jesus Christ, and terminate every one in Him. This is the judgment the Scriptures teach. All else is figurative. This is final fact. The decision is to-day. The judgment is

now and here. The way we live is the Master saying, Come ye blessed, Depart ye cursed; Inherit the kingdom, Go into the fire.

I wish to bring this tremendous fact of the eternities—the most tremendous in the whole scope of human thought, the most tremendous in the whole revelation of the thought of God—right up close to our conscience to-day, and apply it to the cause of Foreign Misions. If we can linger for a little while in this exalted realm, there will be no danger of the flippant remarks that we haven't any interest in Foreign Missions, nor the still more senseless dismission of the subject with, Charity begins at home. Suppose it does. Is charity the only thing in this world that makes a beginning and stops right where it began? Everything else begins and goes on. Does charity begin, and never do anything but begin? Oh, if you only knew it, charity is wondrous in its expansiveness, in its outgoingness, in its pouring itself forth in never ceasing tide. For this is its nature. It is, as the peerless Drummond said, "The greatest thing in the world" for the very reason that if it ever begins, at home or anywhere else, next door or in the antipodes, it goes on with an acceleration known by no other force in this universe, and with an expansiveness that no opposition can daunt, and no maltreatment chill. It went out from the heart of God, and it has been ever since that resistless, rising, whelming tide that shall embrace all souls that are willing, and all lives that are true. Let it begin at home. But when it begins, if it is the

real thing, it can't help but go on. It is its nature to do it. But that is aside from the subject. I desire to place this appeal for Missions on so high a plane to-day, that we shall shudder to suggest a side issue, and shall not presume to question the supremacy and the imperiousness of its claims.

At the International Congregational Council in Boston, Dr. Lawson, the late president of the American Board, had been appointed to address the Council, assembled from many lands, on the theme, "The Permanence of the Motive in Missionary Work." Dr. Lawson was called away by death. Dr. Storrs was appointed in his place, and when Dr. Storrs rises to speak on Foreign Missions, then the flood gates are loosened, and eloquence and pathos and glowing appeal pour forth in a resistless, an exhaustless tide. Then the high water mark of sacred oratory is reached, and the hour of twelve has struck.

Dr. Storrs finds the Permanence in the Motive in the threefold fact of man's universal need, the sufficiency of the divine supply, and its willing and ample bestowal in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. To-day we will go back of this, and find the basis of the motive itself in the identification of the Lord Jesus with humanity. His oneness with every child of man. What we do for Foreign Missions, in the foetal light of that fact, we do for Jesus; and he speaks to us to-day with all the emphasis of the 1800 years that have passed between: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

We might enforce this essential principle, this fact that lies at the foundation, by any of the six analogies our Saviour employs with which to impress His searching thought. The great mass of humanity, who represent the Lord Jesus, are the hungry, famishing for the bread of life, which we have in our hands to give. They are athirst, waiting for us to pour out the living water. They are strangers, oh, how far away, how remote, how little known to us, many times because we have not cared to know—these strangers who are Jesus Christ! They are “naked,” and we hold in our possession the spotless robe. They are sick, ah so sick, and we can take them to the great Physician, and make sure the healing balm. These christs out in all the world. But there seems a peculiar pathos in the sixth of the celestial suggestions, the analogies right from the holy lips, and the infinite Heart. Those who stand for the Lord Jesus Christ, those with whom He identifies Himself, to whom what we do, we do to Him, are “in prison,” and this call in an annual collection puts to us each one the question, in all seriousness, and in all solemnity, shall we come unto Him? Shall it be true, “I was in prison, and ye came unto me?”

It is this sixth analogy conceived in the Master’s impressive thought, that especially emphasizes the claim of Foreign Missions. We may think of the hungry and the thirsting, the sick and the stranger and the naked as close by us, standing, forsooth, at our door. But the man or the woman who is in

prison is far away from us, living in a different world, representing a wholly different realm, with whom there is no point of contact with respectability and order and law—whom we banish as the vicious and the criminal class. When we come to him who is in prison we have stepped wholly out of the range of our silliness when we were wont to say “charity begins at home” as though the fact that it began in that particular place were excuse sufficient and warrant ample for it to end at the point where it began.

The analogy suggests distance. It bids us lift up our eyes and look far away and far on, and there see the least of our Master’s brethren, to whom what we do, we do unto Him. And when we heed the summons, how closely still the analogy applies! These that are in prison! These the lowest and the least! In ignorance and darkness, victims of the long ages of degradation and superstition, where, from generation to generation, the curse has been handed down, accumulating in its burden of helplessness and inhumanity, as the ages have rolled along. The prison house of the world’s dark night.

In her work for Foreign Missions, the church comes to men and women who are in galling chains, the manacles upon their wrists, the shackles upon their feet, the yoke of humiliation upon their shoulders—where, if the gospel she proclaims shall accomplish its mission, it will be a work such as Dr. Storrs so thrillingly describes. “Where the woman, intemperate, in harlotry, in despair, has been lifted to renewed womanhood, as the pearl oyster is brought up with

its precious contents from the slimy ooze; where the man whose lips had been charged with the foulest blasphemy has become the preacher of the gospel of light and love and peace and hope to others, his former comrades; where the feet that were swift to do evil have become beautiful on the mountains as publishing salvation. We have seen these things in individuals and in communities, in the roughest frontier mining camp, where every door opened into a saloon or a brothel or a gambling table. We have seen the same thing on a larger scale in the coral islands, scenes of savage massacre and of cannibal riot and ferocity, where the church has been planted and christian fellowship has been established and maintained."

The work of Foreign Missions, in its essence, in its inmost trend, is this act of which the Master's analogy speaks so clearly and so forcefully—it is the ministry of love to those that are "in prison," the least of the Master's brethren, Himself in a dungeon cell! It takes love to do that work. Indestructable, inextinguishable love; yes, the divine passion, when it is baptised with the spirit of Christ, love that seeketh not its own, can go to humanity that is "in prison," that, in the confinement of the centuries, the chains and yoke of ignorance and vice welded through the ages, is almost on the plane of the brute creation; and, in that cold, dark cell of utterest helplessness, can recognize the Christ, and see Him in the least of these His brethren. The hand of sympathy, the touch of help, that lifts up that lone prisoner in the cell of grossest abandonment, of darkest superstition, is the

hand that clasps in that touch the hand of its Lord, and hears Him say, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." This is the genius of Foreign Missions. President McKinley, in his great speech, at Chicago, said: "from Plymouth Rock to the Philippines the grand triumphal march of human liberty has never paused." I hear the footsteps of a more august and beautific march than that—a mightier tread—it is the march of that spiritual emancipation which, from the day Paul stood on Mars hill until these closing hours of the nineteenth century, has never ceased, and never will until the last prison cell is opened, and the last prisoner steps forth free. In the long watch before Santiago the terror of our great battleships was the two torpedo boat destroyers, those swift, fiendish sharks of the sea, as a naval officer has called them, and yet when the great battle came, it was the unprotected Gloucester, a converted yacht, the former plaything and pleasure boat of a summer vacation, which, without hesitation or turning, attacked those demons of the sea and sunk them both. In that story of the war, I read the more thrilling story of the work of Foreign Missions, in an imprisoned world to-day. The torpedo boat destroyers are the superstitions and the perversions of religious truth that hold in galling chains, in cruel imprisonment, the minds of men, benighted and in hopeless despair. That which smites them and sends them to the bottom of the sea is the Gloucester of Christian love, love in these hearts sur-

rounded by ease and every luxury, all around us as pleasant and inviting as a summer excursion, but a love that goes out to them that are in prison and with all the majesty of love will break their chains, and make the bondmen free. Love sees in them the Christ, and recognizes the face of its Lord.

The Presbyterian church, whose agency we employ in our annual gift to this great end, is worthy of our support and our co-operation. She stands far on, in this ministry to the nations, in the van of all the churches. Hers is the largest Foreign Missionary Society in this hemisphere, and the next to the largest in the world. These are some of the things the Presbyterian church is doing to them that are in prison, to the least of her Master's brethren—to Him. Let me give you some of the facts of the present year. "China is awakening. The lethargy of the centuries is being broken up, and there is opportunity, as never before for the pushing in of a pure Christianity. In Korea, the membership of the churches has doubled in the past year. The king of Korea has issued a proclamation of religious liberty, and the land is wide open for whoever will enter." Liberty for them that are in prison in this far off isle of the sea. In India the church is getting nearer and nearer the 288,000,000, touching them at more points of contact, opening the prison doors. The millions of the Laos people look to us alone for the word of emancipation. In Japan, in Africa, in South America, in the isles of the sea, this great church of ours is carrying forward the work she has

begun in other years, and is ever knocking at the doors of other prison cells, expanding her work, and ministering with the passing months to these, the least of the Master's brethren, and so ministering to Him. So she is standing shoulder to shoulder with the sister churches of America and Europe, helping to

"Bear along,
Round the earth's electric circle
One swift flash of right and wrong."

Avenging the wrongs of the centuries. Bringing to imprisoned humanity the everlasting *right*.

The false systems of religion, in which the nations have been educated, have been tried in the balance of the remorseless past, and have been found wanting. We may discover in their books many exalted conceptions of truth. We may meet with many refined and subtle speculations. There is poetry that soars amid the stars, and metaphysics that flounders in the mud. But these religions have not opened the prison doors, they have not made the prisoners free. Their votaries, the masses in unnumbered millions, who have been nurtured in their bosom, are in lowest degradation, deepest defilement, grossest immorality. "By their fruits," said the Master, "ye shall know them." We apply that test to the religions of the world to-day, we are compelled to do so, to decide aright the great and momentous issues that are involved in the cause of Foreign Missions. If we leave these, the least of our Master's brethren that are "in prison," to the ministry of Buddhism, Brahmanism, Confucianism,

Laoism, Mohammedanism, any of the antagonizing faiths with which Christianity is coping; if we retire from the field, will these make men free? Will these open prison doors? Will these sever the chains, and end the bondage? The centuries give answer. These have been building the prison walls. These have been barring the prison doors. These have been welding the prisoner's chains. And a world in darkness is crying out for our ministry, for the world's alone Emancipator. It is an exalted privilege that comes to us, beloved friends, in this annual call. Are we no thrilled with its mighty possibility? The possibility that you and I, by some willing offering of ours, according as God has prospered us, may open some prison door, may hear the footstep of the prisoner as, with a glad and happy tread, he steps forth free, and while we look into his radiant, beaming face, whether white, or yellow, or black, or red, we may see the face of Jesus, and know, down in our hearts, that doing it to the least of these, his brethren, we are doing it unto Him.

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